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The Significance of Rangoon

Introduction

Last Christmas in Rangoon, Burma, more than one hundred students and seniors from twenty-five nations came together for the first conference of the WSCF Life and Mission of the Church program. This conference was regarded as a pilot project to the World Teaching Conference to be held in Strasbourg next year, because we thought that the issues confronting us as Christians, such as revolution or rapid social change, and the encounter with adherents of other religions, and so forth, in the context of which we should think of life and mission, are most acutely felt and observed in Asia, and also because the response of students to the Life and Mission of the Church program as seen through this conference would enable us to make the necessary changes or additions in order to relate our program more effectively to the students' needs.

The purpose of this conference was twofold: both the communication of a body of knowledge and experience accumulated by ecumenical leaders, particularly Asians, and the further exploration of the issues confronting us in the Asian setting, so they could be more precisely defined. I do not want to give here an objective picture of what actually happened; this has been done in the official report¹ in which you will find a

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description of the structure of the conference and its program, along with excerpts from the speeches and the working party reports¹. A report on the conference was also published in the March-April issue of *Federation News*. What I shall give here is my own interpretation of the significance of the conference and of the LMC study in Asia as a whole, in the light of my understanding and experience of the theological and socio-political problems confronting students there.

It is important to see the Rangoon conference and the whole LMC study as it looks to Asian students, in the particular circumstances in which they find themselves today, so the first thing I want to do is to try to analyze their situation and especially their mood, what they have to say to us, and what they have to contribute to our study. I do not pretend that this analysis is an objective reflection of what they look like, but I shall try to read their minds and recognize their concerns.

Then I shall look at the theme of the Rangoon conference: "God's People in God's World", at the way in which it was developed through lectures and working parties, as an effort to meet these students where they are, and especially to see at what points we need either to change or supplement our approach.

PART I

ISSUES FACING ASIAN CHRISTIANS TODAY

The Asian revolution is going on at a speed and on a scale far beyond what we can grasp or follow. So it is often difficult for the Christians there to understand rightly what really is happening and to relate their Christian faith to it. In addition, we Christians in Asia are confronted with certain specific issues which are of no concern to the majority of our people.

The difficulty or even "failure" of the Christian mission, particularly of foreign missions, in some parts of Asia

In spite of the lack of sufficient communication, it is very clear that the revolution in China is of tremendous interest and

¹ Two speeches and two working party reports are also included in this issue of *The Student World*.

importance for the great majority of Asians today. This is because many believe that this communist revolution is the most thorough one, on the largest scale, that has ever taken place in Asia, and that it will influence in one way or another the direction of the Asian revolution as a whole. Therefore, Christians in Asia cannot help giving serious attention to what has happened generally, and particularly to the Christian churches and evangelical activity in China, knowing that it was one of the major missionary lands in the world. How should we Christians understand the present communist revolution in China ? As God's judgment upon the Christians and the Church ? Or as a trial of the churches ? Or what ?

The impact of the dynamic view of history, especially of Marxism

This leads us to the second question. What is God doing in the history of Asia ? Has secular history anything to do with God's will or action ? The Chinese situation may encourage Asian Christians in their traditional dualistic understanding of the religious and the secular. For the first time in its history, most of the peoples in Asia have accepted a new interpretation of history, a dynamic view. And among young intellectuals, including Christians, the secular, dynamic interpretation, particularly of Marxism, is rapidly becoming popular and influential.

Movements of restoration of selfhood and self-respect by the ancient religions and new ideologies

The common features of the Asian revolution can be observed in the effort of the ancient religions or the new secular ideologies, again particularly of Marxism, to restore or establish the selfhood of Asian peoples and their respect as over against the traditional humiliation by the Western impact. People have been strongly encouraged and have really become proud of being themselves, of their own tradition, of their cultural expressions.

Thus, nationalism in Asia goes hand in hand with the re-awakening religious forces or even with the Marxist ideology.

The impact of socialist nation-building

Finally, the Asian revolution has brought forth many socialist states. No matter whether these develop in a communist or democratic direction, the whole welfare of the people will be in the hands of the state. One result will be that the Christian churches will face, sooner or later, the loss of their privileges to serve society, as well as to evangelize, for many years. What positive attitude should Christians take to this trend towards a completely secular or non-Christian religious enterprise for welfare ?

IN THE MIDST OF "HUMILIATION"

Many serious Christian students feel themselves to be in a humiliated situation in one way or another before their non-Christian neighbours.

Christians and the revolution

Many Christian students as well as their seniors are watching the on-going Asian revolution with mixed feelings of anticipation and anxiety, because they are not quite sure where it will finally lead them, and what the result will be, particularly for the Christian community and its evangelical activities.

Can we Christians welcome this revolution as unreservedly as our non-Christian fellows ? By what standards should Christians judge whether certain changes are right or wrong ? Should we think first of all of what these changes will mean for Christians and the churches and whether religious freedom will be preserved, or should we be primarily concerned about other issues ? How can Asian Christians free themselves from undue concern for their own protection and take a more active role in the revolution ?

When students realize that in the past it was not the Christians, but others, who took the major role in overcoming Western colonialism, that often the Christian churches and leaders take an ambiguous and uncertain attitude towards the on-going changes, very often trying to stand outside of this great tide of history, they feel humiliated.

Some students find themselves in a difficult position in regard to inheriting and maintaining the Christian faith among their fellow-students who are aware of these facts, and in communicating to them this faith, which was transmitted to Asia in one body with Western civilization.

Relations with adherents of other faiths

It is true that Christian students in Asia are often not interested in their fellow-students of other faiths. But this does not mean that the existence of these faiths makes no impact at all upon their own Christian faith or understanding.

Since the coming of the Christian Gospel through Western missionaries, not only Western Christians, but almost all Asian converts have regarded the non-Christian religions as low-grade, full of superstition and ignorance, and no longer really alive despite the superficial service they render. When the East was still under the political domination and cultural impact of the West, these religions even admitted to themselves that the Christian religion was superior.

Christians in Asia often neglected, and even despised, the traditional spiritual values which had nurtured their countries. In such a situation, however, they could not be really creative in their thinking, and could do no more than simply introduce advanced Western ideas. Today people are working hard to revalue and revitalize indigenous spiritual values, and to restore their own original creativity through the dialogue between the Western impact and the renaissance of the ancient Asian culture. More and more people are giving serious attention to the leaders of their own religious faiths who have sustained their own culture.

Moreover, the rapid social changes taking place encourage the people of different religious faiths to encounter one another, and to work and live together in society, for modern industrial society has broken down the old family and communal compartments.

In the midst of this current, how can Christians in Asia be truly creative and influential? Some would ask if it is not a kind of cultural imperialism for Christians to proclaim to

people who are rather content with their own faith or ideas, that only in Christ is their true salvation. Others might think that, at a time when anti-Christian sentiment is growing rapidly, it would be wise for Christians to seek for a provisional co-existence.

All these problems are to some extent in the minds of students who are often very confused.

Their minority position

With the exception of the Philippines, Christians are in the minority almost everywhere. After centuries of evangelism, backed by the dominant Western powers, Christians find themselves still in such a situation.

How much can this Christian minority do in a society where they are surrounded by crowds who are suspicious if not hostile? How much can they do, even if they are sincerely concerned about their social responsibility? Too often they are self-satisfied because they have done something for society, whether this has a meaning or not; or else they are frustrated because it does not seem possible to have any visible effect upon society.

In the present course of history, it is quite understandable that many Christian students feel that they no longer have the things which used to give their Christian fathers privilege and position in society. Their present minority situation is no longer creative and influential, and a way has to be found to restore this creativity.

Spiritual humiliation

When, under the Western impact, Asia was humiliated, not only politically, but also culturally and racially, and its personality became very much distorted, the Christian religion came as a religion of conquerors, of superiors. Consequently, some people came to accept the Gospel in a most humiliated situation, and some rejected it because of their self-respect.

Today, Asia has taken a step towards selfhood. And in this process of establishing selfhood, which was originally given

by the Creator, the greatest obstacle is the deep-rooted feeling of humiliation by the West, or the distortion of its own personality through conformity to the West. Therefore, the effort for restoration of selfhood naturally brings forth the struggle against anything Western. We may not be surprised to discover that, in the end, for many Asians the God who had given the particular blessing to the Christian Westerners and who has been the spiritual foundation which made them believe in their own superiority, is the final enemy to fight against. Therefore, the anti-Christian fight has a particular meaning in Asia today.

For many non-Christians the existence of Christian churches in Asia, and particularly of Western missionaries, is the sharpest reminder of their spiritual humiliation by the West. When we Asians look back over the history of Christian evangelism in Asia, we cannot believe that the remarkable results of evangelism by the missionaries are free from bitter criticism. The younger Christians of today are seriously puzzled about how they can relate themselves to past history and also to the present ecclesiastical situation which is based upon the past. Thus, the words "foreign missions" or even "missions" have become taboo, and students often, consciously or unconsciously, dissociate themselves from missions.

Therefore, many students today feel that the more seriously they take the fact that they are Christians, the more humiliated or puzzled they are in relation to their non-Christian neighbours. As a result many people have come to believe that Christians should rely only upon the power of the Gospel and not on any kind of privilege such as they enjoyed in Asia in the past. Moreover, this sense of humiliation often tends to become demoralizing, and Christian students then become indifferent to others, with the consequence that the small Christian group becomes a closed community, in which individuals find some self-content and a feeling of superiority, or share their fears of the great tide of history.

It is therefore not difficult to understand why a strong sense of mission appears to be missing among these Christian students of today, if mission is understood in its traditional sense.

PART II

HOW DID RANGOON APPROACH THESE ISSUES ?

GOD'S PEOPLE IN GOD'S WORLD

The conference theme was most difficult for students in humiliation : "God's People in God's World". It is not without pain that sincere Christians today call themselves "God's people". They can either accept the words without paying much attention to their meaning, or refuse to be called by that name because they do not deserve it. But the conference theme was chosen out of a conviction that we should accept the present situation as God's judgment upon us and seek for a new beginning for the Church's mission.

There are three significant emphases in this theme, particularly as it touches the Asian church situation.

The Church as the people of God

Today "the renewal of the Church" has become one of the most popular ecumenical slogans, and our study project is certainly an important part of this movement. There is, however, a possibility that this slogan may be responded to in a different way by the so-called younger churches, and especially by their younger members, because they have a remarkable uncertainty about the nature of the Church and its mission.

It often happens that Christians in Asia, instead of participating in the movement of reform or renewal of the Church, expressed in Western terms, begin with criticism of traditional Christian history and by separating themselves from it, in an effort to rediscover the true nature of the *ecclesia* in the New Testament. In this attitude, the sentiment of Asian nationalism is secondary. Their chief concern is with Christian apologetics and biblical theology. The history of the churches in the West is often too heavy for Asians to bear, particularly in the midst of sceptics and antagonists.

Secondly, many Asian Christians would say that, if the churches which were established by Western missionaries only one century or so ago are already in need of renewal — and they believe that they are — there must be something fundamentally wrong with this form of organization, if not in the West, then at least in Asia. Therefore, they feel that what is needed is a fundamental examination of the nature of faith and its expression in history, rather than reformation and renewal of the existing organizations. Such movements as the “Non-Church Movement” in Japan are radical attempts to find a new form of congregation.

Thirdly, one of the results of missionary evangelism in the midst of the traditional religious community is that Asian Christians have been much more concerned with personal conversion and faith than with the Church. Faith is always very individualistic, particularly among the intellectuals. They see the “pure faith”, and any sort of organizational or institutional system is often regarded as the beginning of its corruption.

Thus, for many Christians in Asia, the Church has not been of the essence of their faith, but rather the secondary, necessary institution where, historically speaking, the Christian faith and teaching has been kept. In other words, to many Asian Christian students, the Church means only their own small local congregation, or at most, their own denomination. It is these churches that disappoint them or give them slight satisfaction.

The lack of a right understanding of the Church, its life and mission, is the problem of the Asian student, and in this sense the WSCF project has a great relevance for the Asian SCMs. Further, the significance of the fact that this conference, the first of the LMC program, took the theme, “God’s People in God’s World”, can be clearly understood if we remember that the Church is not understood primarily as an institution but as the people of God. This is a real beginning in Asia today.

God’s People

The second important emphasis in this theme is that we are *God’s* people. If we try to prove this from history or show the merits of Christians in history, we certainly become most humiliated and frustrated.

Asian Christian students, who are completely under the influence of secularism, even in their understanding of the history of the Christian churches in their relation with the world, are much depressed by what they discover there. They often cannot see that Christian history does not simply consist of what Christians have done in history, but, what is more important, of what God has called them to do. One of the striking points made in the conference for students in a humiliated situation was that it is not our merit which makes us Christians. Their eyes had not been raised to the fundamental fact that God makes us his people, not because of our merit, but in spite of our unworthiness, because of his grace; and also that he calls us not to segregate ourselves from others but to congregate together with them in order to realize reconciliation with all men. We are Christians, not for our own sake, but for God's, and for our non-Christian neighbours'. This is a very important point, particularly for Asian Christian students.

Another significant point is that God calls us despite our failure to obey. And the present generation of Asian Christian students is also in this historical movement of response to God's call, however insufficient and unfaithful their response may be. We are part of this body of people in history. This was a new revelation to many of the participants in the conference, and was made particularly clear when they met so many fellow-Christian students from other countries for the first time in their lives.

To be a Christian in Asia is often only a personal or individual matter, or a communal event. In some countries and societies, the Christians are completely scattered, and individual Christians often come from non-Christian homes to the churches. It is quite natural that they should be eager to learn Christian teaching, but it is often at the cost of giving up much of their own background and friends.

In some other countries, people are Christians because they were born and grew up in Christian communities. The community is not simply a religious, but also a social one. There is a strong sense of belonging to the community, but the religious motive is not always the one which binds them together. Often they are not very much interested in the people of other religious

communities surrounding them, and do not see them as people to whom they owe an evangelical responsibility. But the students at the conference were confronted with the theme, "God's People in God's World", in which they saw the meaning of being Christians, particularly in relation to non-Christian people.

It was very significant that the meaning and the responsibility of God's people were sought for in relation to the *world*, *God's* world. Often, because of the individualistic nature of their faith, Christians do not give the world much place in their religious thinking. This is not because they are not interested in it; on the contrary, they are often very much interested, but not in the context of their faith. Whenever they think of the world, they become completely secular, because their faith has nothing to do with it.

Should we conclude, then, that Asian Christian students are becoming totally indifferent to being Christians in their relations with their neighbours? My answer would be "no". They are seriously and sincerely searching for new ways through which they may understand more clearly the meaning of being Christians today in their own lives, in relation to their fellow-Christians, and to the society to which they belong. They are still in the midst of this search, and they have not yet found what they are seeking, because they feel that ready-made answers do not really satisfy them. There are students, and leaders as well, who believe sincerely that it is by God's grace that the Asian churches today find themselves in a very humiliated situation. And they would say that these churches are not quite ready to be missionary churches, because of their insufficient understanding of the nature of the Church, its mission and life, and of the real implications of the revolution taking place for Christian evangelism. The reality of the churches is often far from what the sincere, but also naive, students want it to be, and, accordingly, instead of devoting themselves to the renewal of the churches' life and mission, they tend to form small Christian communities, the Student Christian Movement, in which they themselves can assume full responsibility for the life and mission, and accordingly "escape" from their responsibility to the churches.

Now the conference challenged students at this very point. Without a proper understanding of and interest in the world within the context of the faith, students are unlikely to have a concern for mission, or an interest in the Church itself. In other words, the conference challenged the pietistic understanding of the Christian faith held by most of the participants.

CHRIST THE LORD OF THE WORLD

It was in this connection that another phrase, "Christ is Lord of the world", became a keynote of the conference.

If such an expression had been used without serious consideration, many of the conference participants would have rejected it, because their political and social environment and their theological understanding would have made it hard for them to accept it. However, the six Bible studies by two eminent leaders made it possible for them to see the real meaning of being Christians under the Lordship of Christ. But it should be emphasized that it was not these leaders but the Scriptures which brought home to them this conviction.

Christ as Redeemer of the world

The relation of Christ or the Christian faith to pagan Asia has often been understood only in terms of judgment. Very little has been said about the Creator and the Redeemer of the world. To the Christians, who live in a situation where everything seems unrelated to them or even against them, the world is wicked, and will stand before God's judgment. It is, therefore, not easy for them to believe that this world was created by God and is redeemed by him. It is particularly difficult for students who are strongly influenced by the secular doctrine of historical progress.

In part, this theological position is inherited from the early missionaries who completely rejected the spiritual and cultural background of Asia and converted people on the basis of entire separation from the world. However, this is only part of the picture. Even today, indigenous Christian leaders, under the influence of their difficult minority circumstances, believe that

the Christian message is judgment and salvation in Christ only for individuals, and has nothing to do with the creation and redemption of the Asian world.

Therefore, it was in a sense quite a shock to many of the students to hear this new interpretation of the biblical message. Even such questions as "What is God doing in this revolutionary Asia?" and "What is God doing in the faiths of men?" must have been a great surprise to them.

Christ as Redeemer of the world

The emphasis was laid upon the *world*. God is the Creator and Redeemer of the whole world. The participants were asked to re-examine their own faith in the light of the relation between Christ and the world. And here, for the first time, political and social problems, and the problem of other religions were brought into the context of their faith.

Of course, it is not fair to say that the majority of Asian Christian students are indifferent to social questions as Christians. On the contrary, there are a good number who are extremely interested and creatively active in Christian social concerns. However, even they think and act as individual Christians, or at least as a group of Christians who share the same concerns and understanding as well as faith. It is rare for them to think in terms of the *churches'* responsibility for social justice or peace, etc.

Therefore, we can see a clear division between the pietistic Christians who keep their hands entirely off the world's affairs, and the Christians who are very active in them, but as Christian individuals who base their action upon secular judgments and often take part in secular movements. This latter group is particularly important in Asia today.

Christ as Lord of the Asian revolution

When the conference confessed that Christ is Lord of the Asian revolution, different people interpreted this in different ways. Some understood, as M. M. Thomas, the Chairman, put it, that he is Lord of all revolutions, political, economic, and social, that Christ is present in them, creating, judging, and

redeeming. They understood that it is Christ himself who is acting dynamically in history and making an impact upon it. On the other hand, there was a group of people who preferred to say, "Yes, he is Lord of the world, *in spite* of the present difficulties and confusions, seen in the Asian revolution". None said that Christ has nothing to do with it.

We may classify the participants roughly into two groups: there are those who see, or want to see, the hand of Christ the Lord in history, to feel the impact which he makes, and to relate their faith to the *dynamis* of history, and there are those who understand and believe in the Lordship of Christ only in terms of an eschatological hope, and try to do their best as individual Christians, under given conditions, without seeking for any visible sign of his Lordship in the world.

The former believe that the latter are too pessimistic, too dualistic in their understanding of the faith and in their separating of this world from God's act of creation and redemption. But the latter feel that the former are in danger of drawing faith into the realm of history, thus mixing it up with a world view based on a particular interpretation of history, and this appears to them to be very optimistic. However, I should like to emphasize the great significance in the conference of the dialogue and genuine confrontation which took place between those who had come with different theological and sociological understanding, and many came to believe that such a meaningful encounter among Asian Christian leaders, which is rather rare, gives promise of being really creative in the coming years.

It was a great pity, especially at this point, that we could not have had delegates from China. Nevertheless, there was no doubt that the impact of this greatest revolution in Asia today upon the rest of the continent, and the question of how we should understand and respond to it as Christians, was very much in the minds of the conference leaders. They were keen not to approach it in a negative way as, for example, by asking what Christian churches can do against the impact of communism, or by suggesting an avoidance of the issue. They wanted greatly to find the way to respond to God's calling under the present circumstances, in the belief that Christ is the Lord of *all* Asian people.

It has been suggested that leaders and students alike were not very much aware of the present acute political and social problems, particularly of communism. This is not true. It was, however, the special concern of the leaders that the conference should not become a counterpart of any ideological or religious force in Asia, as we sought to discover our responsibilities towards our non-Christian fellow-Asians under the theme of the Lordship of Christ.

DID THE CONFERENCE MEET THE STUDENTS ?

The answer is both "yes" and "no". The conference was very different from what the majority of the students expected. They thought at first that it was ridiculous for a WSCF conference to deal with problems of the Church, especially with such questions as the new form of the congregation, or the relation between Mission and missions, instead of with the problems of the SCM. This was reflected in an uneasiness among the students and in their rather quiet and passive attitude towards the conference during the first four or five days. There was some discussion in the student dormitories of whether or not the conference should go on without touching the problems of SCMs *per se*. As a result, a group of students came to the Chairman to request that the conference relate the issues more clearly to the life of the SCMs.

This shows, on the one hand, that they could not see the outlines of the total problem we were dealing with as the most urgent and basic one for them. But, on the other hand, it showed that they had their own ideas as to what should be taken up at the WSCF LMC conference, and that they took very seriously their opportunity to participate in it and wanted it to be the most satisfactory one possible. In other words, they were not passive, but really wanted to be positive.

The conference leaders took their request seriously and made some modifications in the program, without, however, changing the general concern and orientation, because it was dealing with the most urgent and relevant issues confronting the Church, and these students also should come to understand.

In the light of what really happened in the conference, can we say that the theme was understood by the participants in the way that was intended? My own opinion is that "God's People in God's World" is a good and proper starting-point from which Asian students can go on to re-examine and rediscover the mission of the Church in the world today, but I am afraid that it is, and was specifically in this conference, in some danger of simply encouraging those who do not see the true nature of the Church, to regard any form of the Christian community as another sort of church, with the further separation of the SCMs from the churches as a possible result. In other words, in our study project we must be very careful to give as much emphasis to the life of the Church as to its mission.

In the end the students did see the real purpose of the conference and its relevance to their own situation. They understood that Rangoon did not intend merely to add to their knowledge or experience something they could easily accept or adopt without much reflection upon it or upon what they already possessed, but that it dealt with something so fundamental and challenging to their unconscious presuppositions that they could at first not see its meaning. Of course, we should not conclude that Rangoon made such a strong challenge to them that they immediately changed their fundamental theological conceptions. It really did hit the mark, but this only opened the way for them to look carefully at where they themselves and their churches stand. In fact, subsequent correspondence has shown that what impressed them most at the conference was its theological side. Some are asking specifically what the conference really meant by "the Lordship of Christ over the world", and others have begun Bible study along this line.

Theological illiteracy, yes. But they really got the most fundamental theological point! Whether Rangoon has any continuing impact upon the participants, and through them upon their SCMs and churches, will very much depend upon the follow-up program in the Federation and the national Movements. The result will be seen, in due course, in Asian church history.

KENTARO SHIOZUKI.

What Is God Doing in the Life of the Church ?¹

HARRY F. J. DANIEL

Introduction

In Acts 5 : 38 ff. Gamaliel says before the Sanhedrin, "Keep away from these men and let them alone ; for if this plan or this undertaking is of men, it will fail ; but *if* it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them, you might even be found opposing God !"

"*If* it is of God..." : perhaps what Gamaliel felt about the Church at the beginning of its career is exactly what we feel after nineteen hundred years. Gamaliel was not certain that it *was* of God — neither are we. Many of us in India, faced with all the changes since independence, are not really certain whether the Church *is* of God. When we see it today, with no political patronage, small in numbers in spite of many years of missionary work, confronted with the revival of Hinduism, divided, disunited, undermined, and discounted, we are tempted to say, "God is doing nothing in the life of the Church". Some of us try to keep the flag flying, try to keep on the old school tie, but it is not because we feel this is vital for us, but to preserve the memory of two generations ago when grandfather said it meant something to him.

In reality, many of us would say, like the German philosopher Nietzsche at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that God is dead. He was right and we are right too, for the god we are speaking of is dead, because he was never alive. This dead god is the god of popular religion, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, or Muslim. This god is an idol of stone or wood or marble, or an idea in our minds. At moments of real crisis this god cannot help us and we say, "There is no God". And the angels say to us as they did to the women at the tomb, "Why seek ye the living among the dead ?" (Luke 24 : 5).

¹ An address given at the Rangoon conference.

Where do we find this living God ?

Surely not in what we call "the churches". It is fashionable for people in India to say, "What we need is *Christianity*, not *Churchianity*". In Japan there are Christians of the *non-Church* type. Is there any possibility of being in communion with the living God while having no connection with the Church ? As we look back in church history we find the belief that Christianity and the Church cannot be separated. A classical expression of this is found in Cyprian of Carthage who says, "He can no longer have God for his Father who has not the Church for his Mother" ¹. This is also repeated by Calvin ². Augustine of Hippo says, "Outside the Church there is no salvation" ³, and this is repeated by Luther in still stronger terms, "Outside the Christian Church there is no truth, no Christ, no salvation" ⁴.

When David Paton visited the SCM in the Madras-Vellore area in October 1944, a handbill was prepared for a conference which he was addressing. Printed across a large map of India were the words, "Outside the Church there is no salvation". Immediately there were reactions from two sources. The non-Christians said, "Look at the arrogance of these Christians. What about our good men ? Will they be damned ?" Or, as one of our national leaders put it, "These Christians are ordinary people making extraordinary claims which are not justified by their history. See what their faith has done for them in 2,000 years. Will it do anything different for me ?" The Christians also reacted against the handbill and said, "What do you mean ? We could at least understand this if the word 'Christ' were used instead of the word 'Church'. We must be more tolerant. Are there not good people like Mahatma Gandhi who will be saved ?"

We must therefore look further into the place of the Church in Christianity. The Bible is not the story of ideas about God, but the story of the people of God. We shall not be redeemed by having the right ideas about God but by meeting God in

¹ *Unity of the Church*, 6.

² *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, 1 and 4.

³ *On Baptism*, IV, 100 ; XVII, 24.

⁴ *Works*, X, p. 162.

his judgment and mercy. The Bible is the story of God's action in history, his setting apart of a people from among many peoples to be the bearer of his revelation and the means whereby humanity may be reconciled to God. The Bible records the conflict about the nature and constitution of the people of God and its relation to the rest of humanity. In the New Testament we see that as a result of this conflict the people of God was thought of not as constituted by birth or by circumcision but by incorporation in Christ. Throughout the Bible we see that redemption is wrought out through a people of his choice : "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit." This is true in every age. We are therefore part of God's people, part of the Church of the twentieth century, part of the Church in Asia, part of the Church throughout God's world. God meets his world through his people here and now and in the form of an actual invitation into the fellowship of a body of people calling themselves the Church.

As Bishop Newbigin says in his book, *The Reunion of the Church* :

The invitation is, of course, meaningless and inexplicable apart from the record which the Bible contains, for the Church derives its existence from the revelation of which the Bible is the record. But the Bible would not be the means of God's actual meeting with me here and now and reconciling me to Himself if it were not that it comes to me in the hands of His reconciled people. The Gospel comes to men not only as a set of ideas ; it does not even come only as a set of ideas which includes the idea of historical actuality. It comes in the concrete actuality of an encounter with God's people. The redemption which God has wrought in Christ is for the world. Its purpose is a new humanity, mankind made one in Christ, converted from the egocentricity which cuts man off from God and his neighbour, and restored to that life of communion for which mankind was created. The first fruits and the instrument of that purpose is the Church, the fellowship of those who have received the reconciliation. There is no reconciliation to God apart from reconciliation with the fellowship of His reconciled people. (p. 28)

But this is one of the great difficulties which the evangelist encounters when he meets the spiritually minded Hindu, and in many ways this is the very difficulty with which all of us are faced. "Why the Church?" "Can I not find God in my own soul, in my own culture, in my own tradition?" "Are not Abanach and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the rivers of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" But the Gospel does not come to each one of us in isolation. It comes to us through a particular book and through a particular fellowship, and this fellowship, like other human fellowships, maintains its existence in history as a visible organization with visible tests of membership, with officers, rules, and ceremonies.

It follows then that we find the living God among his people in the Church.

What constitutes the Church?

The Bible is the story of the people of God. This story begins with God's promise to Abraham and his seed, but physical descent alone does not confer membership in the chosen people, nor does circumcision. There is a covenant relationship between God and Israel, and those who disobey the terms of the covenant are not part of the chosen people. We read of the apostasy of Israel in the days of Elijah, but that there remained a minority which was faithful to the terms of the covenant. In Isaiah, too, the idea of the faithful remnant is worked out, and we see the true people within Israel. These ideas are developed in the visions of the servant of the Lord who shall be the means both of restoring Israel to its true allegiance and also of bringing all nations to the worship of the true God in Zion.

When Jesus comes he does not found a new people of God, but announces the advent of the Kingdom and leads those who follow him to faith in himself as Christ, Lord, and God. He chooses twelve and admits them into intimate fellowship, making them witnesses of his deeds and words and preparing them for his sacrificial and redeeming death and resurrection. When he comes to his cross he is utterly alone. He alone is the true Israel. It is the beginning of the story of the new

Israel. "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone ; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."

The meaning of all these events is not understood. During the days of the resurrection Jesus interprets from the Scriptures the things concerning himself ; he prepares his followers both for his departure from them and his coming again through the Spirit. Then comes the mighty event of Pentecost, and Peter, in the power of the Holy Spirit, proclaims the fulfilment of the promise of God : "The promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him." The message is for all people.

In Acts we read how the Gentiles can also be incorporated into the new Israel, and this not through the Jewish race or through circumcision. We see the Church rejecting this concept, Peter preaching at the house of Cornelius, and Paul going out into the Gentile world. Paul, in Galatians, writes to a Church which threatens to accept the teaching of the Judaizers : "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love" (Galatians 5 : 6). In Romans the same arguments are developed in greater detail : "For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal. His praise is not from men but from God" (Rom. 2 : 28-29). He further says, "Redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith . . . that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3 : 24-26). It is by faith, not by works, that Abraham is justified, and so it is by faith that we too are justified in Christ Jesus and made members of his Church — the new Israel.

The unfinished Church

In this section I am indebted to the excellent book by Bishop Stephen Neill, *The Unfinished Task*. In this book he says :

It is well known that in the Gospels the message of the Kingdom is central, whereas the word "Church" occurs only twice, both times in the Gospel of Matthew (16 : 18 ; 18 : 17) ;

both times in contexts which would be widely recognized as belonging to a late stage in the development of the Gospel tradition. In the visions of the end, in the closing chapter of the Book of Revelation, the Church as such does not appear. References to the Kingdom again become frequent, from Rev. 11 : 15 ("The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever") onwards. There is indeed a message in Rev. 22 : 16 to "the churches" ; but in Revelation "the churches" are the struggling, afflicted churches, called to pass through the great tribulation. In the visions of glory the redeemed appear not as the Church, but under the similitudes of the bride, of the people of God and of the city.

One of the great misunderstandings in the past has been the identification of "the Church" with "the Kingdom". It is because of this misunderstanding that we often speak of "the establishment of the Kingdom", "the bringing in of the Kingdom", "the extension of the Kingdom", whereas in the Scripture the Kingdom of God always means the sovereignty of God, personally exercised. In the New Testament it is God's will to give his little flock the Kingdom. It is God's gift, and man is on the receiving end. As Bishop Neill says :

At the end of the days that Kingdom will again be manifest in power, in a way that at present we are not able even to imagine, in what is commonly called the Second Coming of Christ. In between is the long period which is to be filled in by the ministry of the Church. The Church is provisional and transitory. It takes its origin in the proclamation of the Kingdom ; at the end it will itself be merged into the manifest and triumphant Kingdom. This is not to say that the Church is unimportant ; indeed, in the epoch of its operation, the epoch of the Holy Spirit, it is all-important.

As in discussions about the person of Christ, so also in those about the Church, we should hold together the facts that the Church is both a divine society and also a society in history. As the Monophysites, on the one hand, saw only the divine nature of Christ, absorbing his human nature, so also

we can see the Church as a body that can never sin or be divided, and believe that only the individual Christian members can sin and be divided. As the Nestorians, on the other hand, saw in Christ two souls, one divine and one human, bound not substantially but by moral consent, so also in relation to the Church the distinction can be drawn between the invisible and the visible Church, with membership in the invisible Church being through faith, and the visible Church being accepted only as a regrettable necessity. Like the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.), which settled the question regarding the person of Christ by affirming that "as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ", we should see the Church as *one Church*, both as the body of Christ and so divine, and also human, because Christ's divine purpose is carried out through the co-operation of the imperfect and sinful wills of men and women.

If we understand the nature of the Church rightly, we shall be much less disturbed by its all too evident imperfections.

What is God doing in the life of the Church in Asia ?

In the life of all our churches, God is judging and redeeming his people. This is true not only of the revolutions that are taking place in the nations of Asia, but also of the revival and renaissance of the living faiths of men in Asia today. Many of the facts will be found in the book edited by Bishop Rajah B. Manikam as late as four years ago, entitled *Christianity and the Asian Revolution*. The amazing thing is that in every country in Asia there is a Christian Church in existence, however small, however struggling, however disobedient. This is a fact for which we must thank God. Even in Afghanistan there is a church for foreigners working there. From Palestine at one extremity of Asia to Japan at the other, out of an approximate population of 1,230 million people, forty million are Christians. This means that out of every 100 people in Asia three are Christians, of whom two are Roman Catholic and one Protestant.

It is true that many of the churches of Asia seem to have settled down to an ordinary routine, but still amazing things are happening even today. Take, for example, the Philippines,

which has the largest number of Christians of any country of Asia. Of a population of nearly twenty million people, over eighteen million are Christians. Of these sixteen million belong to the Roman Catholic Church, one and a half million to the Philippine Independent Church, and three-quarters of a million to the Protestant churches. Though the Protestant Church is small in numbers, it is extremely vigorous, and the bulk of the social service workers in the Philippines come from its ranks. Missionaries have already gone from this church to Thailand and Indonesia. The Roman Catholic Church here has often been criticized as being decadent. But the amazing thing is that God works in what seems to be a hopeless situation. We are reminded of the Philippine Independent Church known as the Aglipayan Church, which broke away from the Roman Catholic Church in 1902, under the leadership of Fr. Gregorio Aglipay and Don Isabelo de los Reyes. It has a million and a half adherents and works closely with the Protestant Episcopal Church. Through the mercy and grace of God miracles can still happen where the Church seems decadent and dead.

Look at an example from India. The Syrian Church in Malabar claims a tradition that dates back to the Apostle St. Thomas, about 52 A.D. Though it cannot be proved that he actually visited India, you can still see there his relics and also the spear that is supposed to have killed him, and it can be shown historically that there has been a church in India since the fifth century. Unfortunately, there has been a long history of litigation between two sections of the Orthodox Church in Malabar. In September of last year I sat in the Supreme Court in New Delhi listening to a case between these two sections of the church. It was being heard by Hindu judges and pleaded by Hindu lawyers. At one point I heard a Hindu lawyer explain to the judge the doctrine of the person of Christ ! I wondered if God were dead. Many of us who sat in that court room would never have believed that reconciliation was possible. But just before I left for Rangoon there was the following announcement in our local newspaper :

A divided congregation of over one hundred thousand members belonging to the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church, which had been split into two groups for nearly half a cen-

ture, has been brought under one fold following the Bull issued by the Patriarch of Antioch, accepting Moran Mar Baselios Ghevarughese as the Catholicos of Malankara. The Catholicos in turn handed over to the delegate of the Patriarch here, Mar Elias Julius, Metropolitan, a letter accepting the spiritual overlordship of the Patriarch.

I do not know what this means to you, but to us in India it is one of the stupendous things that has happened through the workings of God.

The Protestant churches in India have inherited various denominations from the West. But in South India, on September 27, 1947, something unique happened. For the first time since the Reformation, Episcopal and non-Episcopal churches united, to form the Church of South India, bringing into organic union members who belonged to the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregationalist traditions. This happened in South India not because of the goodness or uniqueness of the people ; it was the gift of God. There is a move for a similar unity in North India, Pakistan, and Ceylon.

Christianity entered China twice and was twice thrown out before the Jesuits succeeded in establishing a more permanent foothold. The Roman Catholic Church claims to have a membership of over three million ; the Protestant Church, which is comparatively young, began only in 1807, and has a membership of over one and a half million. It is claimed that the Church has grown since the People's Government of China was inaugurated in 1949, though foreign money and personnel have left the country. To many of the churches in Asia which have been dependent on foreign personnel and funds, it is amazing that the Church can go on in spite of having to depend entirely on its own resources. This also raises the question of mission institutions, which may have been "the signs of the Kingdom" in the nineteenth century, but which today have to be reappraised in the light of the emerging welfare states. It is obvious that we should learn to depend ultimately on God alone, whatever may happen within the life of the Church. In China the churches have had to give up their Christian institutions, hospitals, and universities, as these became the responsibility of the state.

This trend is noticeable in several other countries of Asia also. The question posed is whether the churches should continue to run institutions which are really the function of the state. The Church can and will go on, even without foreign personnel and funds and without institutional work.

In Indonesia, out of a population of seventy-eight million, three and a half million are Christians, and Protestants outnumber Roman Catholics. This is a predominantly Muslim country. In the Federation of Malaya the Church is composed largely of Chinese and Indians, and there may be less than five Malayan Christians because of the Treaty entered into by the British and the rulers of Malaya recognizing Islam as the official religion. Yet in Indonesia the SCM has open membership, large numbers of Muslim students are members, and each year some of them are baptized into the Christian Church.

In many such instances we see the miraculous working of God. But he is also judging his Church for its disunity, its lack of concern for mission, and its lack of appreciation for new ways in which to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The blessings we have received are in spite of ourselves, and the Church is called once again to pay heed to the judgments of God, both those which come from outside the fellowship of the Church and those which come from within.

The mood of the people

One of the striking things about the Asian situation today is the number of governments that have been taken over by military commanders. There seems to be an enthusiasm in these countries for the "strong man" who will tell the people what to do and what not to do. So also in the life of the Church, there seems to exist a desire for the "strong man" who will say, "The Gospel is a, b and c ; if you want to be a Christian do x, y, and z, and you will be all right." Today success seems to lie with Roman Catholics and fundamentalist groups, because people seem to find in them a degree of certainty in an insecure world. I think we must in some ways be grateful for the ministry of Billy Graham. But I do not believe that his method is an answer to the major problems of evangelism in Asia.

The real answer for the Church in Asia lies at a much deeper level, especially in view of the achievement of nationhood, the building of a just economic order, the formulation of new cultural values — and all this in the midst of the revival of the ancient faiths of the peoples of Asia. It is true that people want some kind of certainty, and yet our only ultimate certainty is Jesus Christ, who is alive and present in every situation in this world in judgment and redemption. This may mean that those of us who believe in the cosmic redemption of Jesus Christ will have to remain a minority within the life of the Church for a time.

Some essential characteristics of a living churchman

We are called to be servants and witnesses and to offer to God not only ourselves but the whole world of men and all the works in which they are engaged. Jesus Christ is Lord not only of the Church but of the whole world. Evangelism bears witness to this living Jesus Christ, present in the life of both the Church and the world. We have to see again what it means to worship a living Christ. When I go to a government office in New Delhi to have an interview with an officer whose name indicates he is a Hindu, I usually tell myself that, if I truly believe in the Lordship of Christ, I ought to feel even more at home when I enter the room there than he does, because the Lord I worship is the Lord of his life also, and this secret is known to me although not to him. If this is our attitude to the world and the men among whom we live and work, there is no need for fear. Yet there is so much fear of the world in most of our churches ; we seem to feel secure in our churches and insecure in the world. We have to proclaim this living Christ and his saving acts both by distributing the Holy Scriptures and also by word of mouth. We must do this in all our Christian institutions where such proclamation is still possible, because, unless people hear, they cannot believe.

But still more important, we must rediscover the meaning of the laity within the life of the Church. Christians gather on Sundays for the ministry of the word and sacraments, but find themselves scattered throughout the world from Monday

to Saturday. It is in these various spheres of work and through their participation in all the activities of men, that they point to the living Christ who is also present in every situation. In serving thus we continue the work of Christ who took upon himself the form of a servant.

Here we see the exciting new possibilities for mission in those areas of the world where Christians and non-Christians work together. The Church is a community of those who are forgiven and who live continually under God's forgiveness. We are faithless; we have rejected Christ; we have denied him; we have been wilfully disobedient, and yet God continues to forgive us. It is only because of his faithfulness that he acts through us at this present time. We are called not for our own sakes but for the sake of the world. In spite of the offence we have caused through our disunity, communalism, racialism, in spite of all our sins, we go boldly into the life of the world because Jesus Christ is already present there, trying to preserve the things which are of God in the life of the world and also bringing to the world his gift of healing and reconciliation.

We are called to be the people of God in God's world. As we think of what God is doing in the life of the Church in Asia today, we must see what God is doing among those of us who are gathered here and the concrete acts of obedience that he wills for us. God who has chosen us will be faithful as we go out into the world in which he has placed us; he will show us a little more clearly our role as God's people in God's world, and will enable us to bring to this world which he created, redeemed, and sustains, the healing and reconciliation which he wills for the world through the members of his Body — the Church.

The New Man in Christ and Renascent Buddhism in Ceylon ¹

THIRULOGENDRAN KANDIAH

The powerful Buddhist revivalist impulse that provides the dynamic for many of the important island-shaking events in Ceylon at the present time has two aspects. On the one hand, it is a *religious* revival, inspired by an earnest quest for durable happiness in the insecurity of the modern world, a world that seems to have lost its sense of direction. On the other hand, it is a *national* movement that is striving to rediscover the Buddhist community.

The reinterpretation of Buddhism

A consideration of the religious aspect of the movement reveals a conscious desire to reinterpret Buddhism in a language that is meaningful within the contemporary social context. Buddhism is awakening to what M. M. Thomas described as "a theology of society". In the first place, since the modern world is so much conditioned by science and the scientific outlook, there is an attempt to bring Buddhism to terms with science ; at the same time, however, the limitations of science in explaining life are insisted upon. In the words of K. N. Jayatileke, lecturer in philosophy at the University of Ceylon, Buddhism "is not likely to be at variance with science so long as scientists confine themselves to their methodology and their respective fields without making a dogma of materialism". The reinterpretation of Buddhism is seen secondly in the toning down of its original emphasis on emancipation from suffering by meditation, and the new emphasis on social service and action. Along with this goes a marked subordination of the individualism characteristic of Buddhism to a new sense of the corporate. For instance, at a conference held last November

¹ An address given at the Rangoon conference.

at Bangkok, Dr. G. P. Malalskera of Ceylon, President of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, seriously considered the role of the *bhikkhu* (monk) in society, and even went so far as to raise the question of whether the *bhikkhu* should take part in politics, although he offered no answer. In *The Revolt in the Temple*, a history of 2,500 years of Buddhism in the world, there is a more direct expression of the radical claim that Buddhism is a way of life, and must be given shape as a social structure, a form of government, or, in other words, a political system. This view, while very extreme, is not questioned by a good proportion of the leaders of the movement in Ceylon. The reinterpretation of Buddhism is seen also in the revival of the missionary implications of some of the Buddha's sayings. From this arises the claim that Buddhism has the only relevant message for a chaotic world. This is expressed in *The Revolt in the Temple*: Buddhism's "treasures of spiritual wisdom... are for the healing of nations". In the light of these three points it may be possible to say that, at the religious level, the Buddhists in Ceylon are rediscovering their life and mission.

Political aspect of Buddhist revival

Coming now to the political aspect of the revival, it would be fair to say that herein lies the strength of the movement. Much of this strength comes from the fact that the aspirations of the Buddhists are identical with those of the Sinhalese, the majority community in this multi-social country. The movement as a whole is called the Sinhala-Buddhist movement. It is especially directed against the Western-educated classes who, under British rule, used their education to attain positions of privilege which were beyond the reach of the majority who remained "native". Now these classes are threatened by the awakening masses. The almost completely alien bourgeois Protestant Church in Ceylon draws its followers especially from these privileged classes, and therefore forms one of the main targets of attack. One of the chief protests of the Sinhala-Buddhist concerns the educational system. There are in Ceylon, in addition to the state schools, denominational schools, most of which get considerable aid from the government. In many

of these, the great majority of students are non-Christians, who are not given any type of religious instruction in the schools. The Buddhist rightly claims that this is unjust, since the great majority of taxpayers in the country are non-Christians. They accuse the Christians of running their schools as they wish, but with the money of the Buddhists. The Church, however, often refuses to grant the justice of this. The revolt is therefore partly against the legacy of British imperialism. The period of foreign rule is considered the most hateful in the history of Ceylon, and the Church is considered a mere outpost of Empire, a bitter reminder of a dark age. The missionary, in the words of *The Revolt in the Temple*, "no longer stands by himself. He is seen in the East as an integral part of the imperialistic advance of the Western State. But now the Empire is no more, the Sinhala-Buddhist is beginning to come into his own, is beginning to rediscover himself." The *bhikkhu*, who under British rule had sunk from a position of pre-eminence into an insignificant shadowy existence in the background, is now re-emerging, and trying to re-establish the pre-European *status quo*. Along with this goes the attempt to help Sinhala-Buddhist culture — "the lame horse", or "the sick child", as it is variously described — to recover its lost position and to catch up with those who have left it behind.

All this is connected with the search by the Sinhala-Buddhist for a sense of national destiny. In this search, he resorts to a myth which is found in the *Mahavasma* and other ancient chronicles of Ceylon. According to this myth, the dying Buddha tells Sakka, the chief of the deities, to look after Vijaya, the legendary founder of the Sinhalese race, who at that moment was about to land in Ceylon. For he is said to have perceived by his supernatural powers that in Ceylon, among the descendants of Vijaya, the Buddhist doctrine is to be established and preserved for the future. In the words of the myth, Buddha tells Sakka :

In Lanka (Ceylon), O Lord of Gods,
Will my doctrine be established.
Do thou, therefore, guard well
Him (Vijaya), and his followers and Lanka.

This myth has provided the land with a sense of destiny, and from it the Sinhala-Buddhist leaders in Ceylon have fashioned the theory of the oneness of the land of Ceylon, the race of the Sinhalese, and the faith of Buddhism. The working out of this theory of the land, the race, and the faith logically brings about a situation in which minority religions and communities have no rightful place. So what began as a very just cause finds in the end a very unjust expression.

This strong fascist element, this racial theory reminiscent of Nazi Aryanism, has been revived in the movement by leaders who cloak their lust for power in liberal democratic terms. In the words of C. R. Hensman, Program Secretary of the Life and Mission of the Church project in Ceylon, these people do not use "this year's word for this year's meaning" — that is, they use the language of liberal democracy, not with a meaning which is relevant to a modern multi-social and multi-religious society, but with what may be called a pre-1815 meaning; in other words, they are trying by the use of these words to make a case for the re-establishment of the *status quo* which was broken down in 1815, the year in which the only remaining independent portion of the island, the Kandyan provinces, ceded to the British in return for certain guarantees which were embodied in what is known as the Kandyan Convention. Among the most important clauses in the Convention was that which guaranteed the continuation of the traditional state patronage of Buddhism: "The religion of the Buddha professed by the chiefs and inhabitants of these provinces is declared inviolable, and its sites and ministers and places of worship are to be maintained and protected." As the Sinhala-Buddhist justly points out, this clause was not observed by the British; and the Buddhist Committee of Inquiry which was set up in 1954 "to inquire into the present state of Buddhism in Ceylon and to report on the conditions necessary to improve and strengthen the position of Buddhism" entitled its report *The Betrayal of Buddhism*. While it is true that the Kandyans broke the Convention first by rebelling in 1818, it cannot be denied that there is justice in the accusation implied in the title of the report. But the attempt of leaders to re-establish this pre-1815 *status quo* only helps to colour the movement with a strong

fascist tinge ; for, under the modern multi-social and multi-religious conditions that exist in Ceylon today, the re-establishment of the pre-1815 situation could only result in injustice. Only a few, however, are aware of how much intolerance and injustice underlie such terms as "liberating nationalism", used by leaders to describe the movement. As a result, the leaders are able to pass off as the democratic ideal of unity and solidarity, a forced uniformity under the banner of Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism.

Declaration of the New Man in Christ

It is against this background of hostility that the Church in Ceylon is called upon to declare the New Man in Christ. This central point in the mission of the Church is being challenged by the non-Christian who claims that every religion gives an equally valid interpretation of the meaning of existence and that, therefore, the missionary aspect of Christianity has no acceptable foundation. The Christian, however, knows that his religion, unlike all others, takes us a certain distance towards the truth ; in the words of Dr. Henry Stob, only Christianity has a "final unconditional validity... above the relativities of time and circumstances". Christ claimed for himself absoluteness : "I am the way, and the truth, and the life ; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14 : 6). Peter elaborates upon this : "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4 : 12). These words imply that there is a fundamental antithesis between Christianity and other religions. These religions too have what Dr. Stob calls "the inner, unquenchable awareness of God", but this awareness is not pursued to the final understanding, and there is only a partial revelation of the truth. As a result, in these religions only general revelation may be found, which is "a display in nature and history of God's might and divinity", and common grace, where God, "without working regeneration and salvation... gives good gifts to the rebellious". Incidentally, by the rebellious are meant not the non-Christians, but fallen man. "Christianity, as against this, has what is known as special revelation, made

by God coming himself in the person of Christ to earth. And out of this supreme act was made available to man the absolute power of saving grace." When the problem is considered in this perspective, it can be seen that the unavoidable central point in the mission of the Church is to declare the New Man in Christ.

This declaration can be made at three levels. First, at the individual level, the emphasis is placed on the conversion of the man. The Christian has to convince the non-Christian that his claim that Christ is absolute is a valid one, that the non-Christian must die to his old religion before being reborn in Christ. In his encounter with the Buddhist, therefore, the Christian must show that the vision of individual destiny as embodied in the Arahant, the man who has obtained deliverance from the cycle of rebirth, is an incomplete one. Against this, he must place the total vision of individual destiny as revealed in the New Man in Christ, who, having died to the old man in sin, has availed himself of the saving grace that Christ gives to mankind in order to obtain eternal life.

In the process of declaring Christ at the individual level, the Christian will encounter Buddhism as a system, and here is the second level at which he must act. This involves a consideration of Christianity in a dialectical relationship to other religions. By this is meant that Christianity should be seen as, on the one hand, a denial of other faiths, showing where something has gone wrong in their attempts to find God, and, on the other hand, as a fulfilment of these faiths. The following reasoning, adapted from a pamphlet, *Belief in God*, by the Rev. Lynn A. de Silva, illustrates the method which Christian apologists in Ceylon will have to use. When the Buddhist claims that life involves suffering, the Christian is in complete agreement with him. However, the Christian denies the Buddha's explanation that suffering is due to desire, and that desire itself is only one link in a chain of causation, the first link being ignorance. This explanation is based on the premise that everything has a cause. An acceptance of this involves acceptance of a first cause which is not dependent on anything else. In other words, the Buddhist is faced with the problem of the cause of ignorance, just as the Christian is faced with the prob-

lem of the cause of God. Unlike the Christian, however, the Buddhist is unable to dispose of his problem, for, to use the Rev. de Silva's words, "If ignorance is the root cause, we cannot understand how mind came into being. It is impossible to think of the qualitatively less being able to produce the qualitatively greater." The Buddha was very keenly aware of the part that mind plays in this suffering existence, yet he was unable to explain how mind came into being. He could only say that mind was formed by the coming together through a natural process of the five *khandhas* or factors of individuality. He could not, however, explain the capacity of nature to bring these factors together to form the mind. The Christian, on the other hand, is able to dispose of his problem. He traces the root cause of suffering to mind or spirit, and then explains the existence of mind as the work of a supreme Mind, a supreme intelligence which can account for its own existence. Thus Christianity, when confronting Buddhism as a system, says both "yes" and "no"; it both denies it and fulfils it.

Finally, the Church must declare the New Man in Christ at the level of the whole sweep of history and of creation. The Christian must declare that God is the God of history; he must explain the meaning of existence in the eschatological context; he must declare that God is constantly working through history; that men and nations are but actors on the stage of known creation; that this creation is being moved towards its fulfilment through a process which has already been initiated by Christ on the Cross; that before this fulfilment is accomplished the creation must be judged, and, through Christ's saving grace, reborn, and taken up into life everlasting. "There shall be a new heaven and a new earth", and the New Man in Christ shall be seen living in it. This meaningful interpretation of history and existence is alien to Buddhism. To the Buddhist, life is ultimately suffering, and the movements of history are therefore meaningless. In this scheme of things, there is no place for a sense of vocation, either for individuals or for social groups. On the other hand, the Christian interpretation of history gives a real sense of urgency to the mission of the Church in Ceylon. For when the Church in Ceylon looks at history in the Christian perspective, it sees that through the present

crisis of Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism, the God of history is at work. Through this crisis, God is judging a Church that in certain important things has failed him. It has failed him mainly by its willingness to associate itself almost uncritically with the forces that have been responsible for the betrayal of Buddhism. Furthermore, its bourgeois orientation helps to erect a permanent barrier between it and the country which it has to bring to the feet of Christ. Its culture is completely alien to the country, and therefore almost the only people who are given the "privilege" of understanding the truth as the Church declares it are the very few who are Western-educated. The Church in Ceylon has failed to exercise its prophetic function; the Sinhala-Buddhist movement is the instrument of God's judgment of the Church. But God is also the God of mercy, and if the Church in Ceylon is willing to confess its failure, die to its old orientation, and, through his grace, adjust itself to the new situation, then it will be able to come out of the crisis and *live*.

All this must be kept in mind in any consideration of the third level at which the Church is to enter into a dialogue with non-Christians. It will then be clear that Christianity's claim to exclusiveness must be made with less arrogance than in the past. The points of contact between Christianity and other religions must be appreciated and exploited. A very practical program of action at this level has been set out by the Rev. S. J. de S. Weerasinghe, in an article in the current issue of *The Pilgrim*, a Ceylon SCM publication¹. He suggests three levels at which a program of indigenization may be worked out. On the cultural level, the Church should preserve what is precious to the nation and should "baptize" certain local practices and ceremonies into its normal practice. Along with this should go the attempt to avoid too close an identification with Western culture. On the intellectual level, the Church should rethink boldly its theology in the context of the resurgence of Buddhism. It should take the risk of making mistakes in the formulation of an "Asian theology" to replace Jewish and Western patterns. Finally, on the personal level, the author

¹ "Christ in a Cultural Heritage", *The Pilgrim*, Christmas 1958, p. 52.

advocates Christian participation in non-Christian ventures, both religious and secular. In all this, of course, syncretism must be avoided. The points of contact between the way of Christ and the way of the Buddha must be appreciated, but Christ alone is the Way. The survival of the Church in Ceylon depends on its effective declaration of the New Man in Christ at these three levels.

A time of testing

The Sinhala-Buddhist has not yet launched his main attack on the Church, but the first sallies are now being made. The government is more and more extending its patronage to Buddhism as against other religions. On certain fronts, the Buddhist powers have made gains at the expense not only of Christian privileges, but also of Christian rights. When the tidal wave finally strikes with its full force, little will be left of the Church ; only the faithful few will remain — and perhaps this will be to the Church's advantage. But now is the time of trial, now is the Church being tested. Not many in the Church seem to realize this, and so, from their straitjacket of privileges, they continue complacently to condemn the fascism of the Sinhala-Buddhist movement. The Church in Ceylon is being tested ; whether it can emerge triumphant as a new creation depends entirely on whether it is willing to die to its old life and create a new life. Then only will it be able to make the Christian vision a living reality to the rest of Ceylon : the vision of the New Man in Christ, of the Holy City of God descending as a new creation on the earth, a new creation in which all cultures and creeds will be brought to their final fulfilment in Christ.

The Church and Chinese Buddhism

R. P. KRAMERS

This article does not aim at giving a comprehensive survey of what is being done and what has been done by church and missions in their encounter with Buddhism among the Chinese. Such a survey would require a much more thorough preparation, and probably turn out to be a fat volume. The aim of this article is rather to present some rambling observations and impressions, resulting from a beginning of contact which we have here in the Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion in Hong Kong. As the reader will know, several Study Centres are now in operation on the Asian scene, their main purpose being to help the Church in its relevant contact with its spiritual surroundings. Here, too, we are trying to fathom the Chinese world of today, without, however, neglecting the tenacious roots by which it is still linked to its long and rich tradition.

Buddhism's permeation of Chinese life

There can be no doubt that Buddhism is an important part of this Chinese tradition, although not the most central part. But for Christians the phenomenon of Buddhism in China presents its special fascination, because, like Christianity, Buddhism is a religion with a universal claim entering the Chinese scene from outside. Several Chinese Christian writers have held up the peaceful ways of Buddhist penetration into Chinese culture as a mirror and example for the Christian enterprise. Buddhism did not come protected by the sword, and yet it made a deep impression on Chinese life and to a certain extent became part of it. To be sure, there have been persecutions when the Buddhist movement became very strong, and Confucian scholar-officials saw in it a danger to the preservation of Chinese culture as a whole and advocated, in the words of one of them, "confiscating their temples, burning their books, and humanizing their humans" — the latter phrase meaning that the Buddhist monks

and nuns should return to secular and married life. But on the whole there was a steady process of accommodation of Buddhism in various forms to the Chinese scene, and if not always adhered to, it is at least respected as one of the "three religions" or "three doctrines", with its own venerable Chinese ancestry.

Where do we find evidence of this permeation of Chinese life by Buddhism today? We might take you around Hong Kong and its picturesque surroundings, to some beautiful secluded spots harbouring Buddhist monasteries — not the large ones you would find in Japan or on the Chinese mainland, but none the less quite characteristic in their organized form of worship by the *sangha*, the fellowship of the Buddhist community which technically includes only the monks and nuns, the ones who "have left their families". One would not find many in Hong Kong, which was never a great Buddhist centre, and which perhaps today harbours more than its usual share of Buddhist clergy because a number have sought refuge here from the mainland. Or we could lead you to one of the old back streets in Hong Kong where you can find five or six little establishments of monks and nuns — the places one goes to arrange for their services at old style funerals. We might show you a so-called "vegetarian hall", really a home for the aged, where old ladies who have no families live their last peaceful years in a tranquil community, usually with a hall for Buddhist worship. All this, to be sure, still has its place in the life of the common people, but it mostly breathes an atmosphere of the past, and is not associated with young people.

Modern expressions of Chinese Buddhism

But it is unthinkable that two revolutions would have left untouched the development of Buddhism in China. And evidence for this development must not be sought for in the first place in the *sangha* in its narrow sense of Buddhist clergy, but in what might very well become a new conception of the *sangha* which would then include devoted and active laymen. Lay activity is nowadays quite pronounced in the Chinese world outside the mainland — it is hard to judge similar developments in the mainland itself — and this lay activity expresses itself in the

formation of Buddhist associations which engage in all kinds of social work and stimulate interest in Buddhist doctrine by means of publications and lectures. International contact is sought and maintained, in tune with the general cultural awakening of young Asian nations which are delving into their own heritage to find sure foundations on which to stand firm in this modern world. Together with this there is a search for unity in the manifold expressions of Buddhist doctrine, because the differences between the various schools had always been the concern of the clergy rather than the laity.

We do not wish to suggest, however, that the clergy has no role to play in the reassertion of Buddhism among the Chinese today. In the 'twenties and 'thirties there were some outstanding abbots and monks, the abbot T'ai-hsü being the best known among them, who led this reassertion in confrontation with the phenomena of science and democracy in the modern world, and in present-day periodicals, mainly published in Formosa, much material can be found which tends to show that Buddhism is the only "scientific" faith, compatible with the findings of modern psychology and natural science. Thus, three potent arguments can be found in modern expressions of Chinese Buddhism: the argument of basic unity of the faith, that of belonging to the Chinese heritage, and that of compatibility with modern scientific theory. Or, to state it more tersely: we are Buddhists, we are Chinese, we are modern.

Christianity and Buddhism in China

In the course of these attempts at revival and confrontation with modern life, it is not surprising that Christianity has also received close attention in Buddhist circles. Christianity is seen in the first place as indissolubly linked to Western culture, and this view is compatible with a widespread Chinese view which sees religion primarily as a part of culture and not the other way round. The history of Christian missions and of the growth of the Christian Church in China, moreover, shows much to strengthen this viewpoint. The Church among the Chinese, on the whole, is still accused of having said: we are Christians, we are modern — but having forgotten to take seriously the second argument: we are Chinese, and instead of having said, in

deeds rather than in words : we are Western. Christianity and "Western learning" so often went hand in hand, and for those who seek for arguments to condemn Christianity in China as foreign and undermining the sense of national belonging, it is quite easy to find ample evidence of this. As long as, for example, many schools in Hong Kong offer a course in "English Bible", thus confusing the learning of English and seeking Christian knowledge, these criticisms will remain, no matter how far the Church has proceeded in other fields in its identification with Chinese life. Buddhists, too, sometimes participate in this general accusation of the Church, and they often feel great pride in really belonging to the realm of Chinese culture.

Yet they cannot go too far in this, for the accusation of foreignness has also time and again been levelled against Buddhism itself, which can never deny its Indian origin. Here another argument in the Buddhist apology sets in : they compare the peaceful Buddhist penetration and accommodation in China with the extreme aggressiveness manifested in the history of the Christian Church in general and also in China. Buddhism has no war record, not even in Thailand where revolutions are bloodless. The history of Christianity, on the other hand, is strewn with crusades, schisms, inquisitions, and sectarian intolerance. This must belong to the Western spirit, and one writer recently traced it back to the tragic fact that Jesus had not been strong enough to transcend the Jewish religious spirit which was again victorious in the Christian Church after his death. Yet there are also voices in Buddhist circles which show a renewed concern for the purity of Buddhist doctrine. In Formosa a movement has begun to "distinguish the Buddha from the gods", in an attempt to eliminate an encroaching popular syncretism from Buddhist worship and religious understanding. And when a monk asserts that the emergence of the *Ch'an* (or *Zen*) school, the school of meditation, was the point where Buddhism went wrong in China, dissolving its identity into a more ancient Chinese mystical tendency towards union with *Tao*, we seem to hear a faint echo of our Christian slogan, "Back to the Bible".

All this, however, does not diminish the seriousness of some of the accusations against Christianity, and it is with regret

that we read about complaints that Buddhist meetings in Formosa have sometimes been disturbed by Christian zealots, and reports of Christian-Buddhist altercations on a low level. One of the points of dispute is that Buddhists declare Christianity to be superstition on account of a belief in a god, whereas in Buddhism the gods have their place in the wheel of transmigration which is transcended by the Buddhist way. Christians on their part accuse Buddhism of atheism because of this attitude.

In order to help bring the discussion on a higher level, one of our assistants in the Study Centre wrote a short article mainly directed towards Christians, to introduce them into the Buddhist conception of highest reality, which is sometimes named "true suchness" (a striking analogy with "I am that I am") or "the Buddha nature". His aim was not so much to equate the conception of God with that of "true suchness", but rather to show that, if a comparison of equivalents is made, it should be here and not in the confusing nomenclature of "gods" or "atheism". There was an appreciative reaction to this article in a Buddhist magazine, which, however, maintained the subordinate nature of gods, and relegated any god-consciousness to pre-Buddhist stages of consciousness. In the course of this article the writer also drew a picture of Christian doctrine which was culled mainly from the Apocalypse, and in such a way that the visions of John were taken to be programmatic successive stages of the Christian life and the Christian hope. Now we do not know how the writer arrived at these notions of Christianity and why he especially picked out the Apocalypse when he evidently had the entire New Testament at his disposal. But it seems very probable that part of the reason is the stress laid on the Apocalypse by Christian sects of the millenary type in their preaching among Chinese — the Book of Revelation has already created much havoc in the history of the Church.

A pioneer Christian effort

From all this it is clear that we cannot speak nowadays of any genuine encounter between Buddhists and Christians. The efforts by Chinese Christians to come to an appreciative

understanding of Buddhism have been few and far between. The only original and consistent attempt at missions among Buddhists has been the work of a Norwegian missionary, Dr. K. L. Reichelt. Sent out as a missionary to China, he came into contact with wandering Buddhist monks who in accordance with custom travelled from monastery to monastery on their pilgrimage to Buddhist holy centres. He conceived the idea of establishing a home in which to receive these wandering pilgrims on their way through. He could then have discussion with them in search of the truth, and, if they wished to stay on in order to gain more knowledge of Christianity, he would enlist them as students in an introductory course. During the first three or four years of his work over five thousand Buddhist pilgrims visited his home. Some of them stayed on and accepted Christianity. But the main strength of this work was in the passionate interest in the Buddhist faith which inspired Dr. Reichelt, and which gained him access to Buddhist temples and monasteries. They felt he was sincere in his enthusiasm, sincere and not self-seeking in trying to know the Buddhist mind, and this spirit enabled him to create an atmosphere of friendship and trust.

In this light we must also see another thing he attempted : an expression of Christianity in Buddhist forms. After his first centre in Nanking had to be closed down on account of internal political troubles, he eventually set up the centre in Hong Kong, and called it *Tao fêng shan*, the "Mountain of the Logos-spirit". This centre was built in the style and architecture of Chinese Buddhism, and here he had full scope for introducing some Buddhist symbolism and form ; best known is the symbol of the cross rising out of a flowering lotus, the latter being the Buddhist symbol for enlightenment. The liturgy was permeated with Buddhist terms and usages ; most notable was the dedication or "refuge-taking" formula, replacing the Buddhist *triratna* or "three precious ones", the Buddha, the Law and the Community, by the Christian Trinity. Much of this symbolism and liturgical form has been discontinued since his death, mostly at the insistence of Chinese converts. This may be regrettable, on the one hand, but it shows all the more clearly that their real strength was not in these forms themselves but

in the love, enthusiasm, and outreaching concern of the person behind them. I was very interested in this connection in Dr. J. R. Chandran's article in a previous issue of *The Student World* (IV, 1958) on the indigenization of Christian theology in Asia, in which he pleads for freedom of experimentation by Christian theologians in Asia, even at the risk of unorthodoxy. If the Gospel is truly proclaimed in a human situation, it is always relevant and fresh. And who says that Christians should live in the world, wrapped in the armour of correct orthodox thinking and impervious to deviationism? Certainly, there is risk and danger along the path of Christian creativity. Reichelt's work has been repeatedly and perhaps correctly criticized. But it was his burning concern for Buddhist monks which made his creation of form more than mere "fancy-dressing... with non-Christian terminology taken from ecclesiastical forms of religions". And it is this concern only which can prevent such an experiment from becoming a mere evangelistic technique or method, whatever else one could say against it on theological grounds.

We feel very privileged that the Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion has been offered hospitality in *Tao fêng shan*, for the original work among Buddhist pilgrims has had to be discontinued, owing to obvious political changes. But the centre is there as a sign, reminding Christians of the great Chinese world, with its rich traditions and its enormous problems, waiting to be contacted with that love and enthusiasm which inspired the founder of this place. It reminds us of our plain duty as Christians to learn to understand this Chinese world, to expose ourselves to its creeds, not as a means to test our own faith or as a new missionary method, but out of concern for that world.

What will come out of this understanding we do not know, but that it is an urgent task to be undertaken seems sufficiently clear even from the brief indications given in this article about relations between the Church and Chinese Buddhism.

THE STUDENT WORLD CHRONICLE

Rangoon

An appreciation by DAVIS McCAUGHEY

I confess that I set out for Rangoon with some elements of scepticism in my recalcitrant spirit. Some of the earlier statements about the project had been written in such a way that straightforward statement of purpose was too much overlaid with rhetoric and exhortation ; and I wondered if the scheme was anything more than a "think-up" — or perhaps an enthusiasm — of a few at the centre of the Federation's life, as good an excuse as any other for getting students to fulfil the WSCF's perennial task of deepening the awareness of God, his Word, and his Church on the part of students by bringing them together in a fellowship of prayer and study. Next year another title would do as well. But I was wrong. My lingering doubts were removed, I think, by three things :

1. One was the quality of Asian leadership present at Rangoon, both student and senior. Not only was the leadership of this conference predominantly in the hands of Asians ; it was also a sign of the times that no missionary in the traditional sense was present. This is not to deny the continuing importance of the missionary : it is simply to draw attention to the fact that the concerns of the Asian churches are increasingly being articulated by Asians, and that is as it should be. Even as it was, the structure and approach of the conference was criticized as being too Western.

2. The second thing that dispelled my doubts was the extraordinary degree of encouragement to the whole enterprise being given by those leaders of the IMC and the WCC who are most anxious to ask (or to have asked) the radical question. If this sample of Asian thinking is at all representative, there is very little reason to think that the result of the project will be a "hotting up" of support of the missionary enterprise as we have had it. The point has been made that the larger and more representative the work of the WCC becomes, the slower will be its progress : success in bringing the church structures (WCC) into relation with missionary society organization (IMC) will create a greater need for the less formal, less "responsible" thought and prayer which can go on in

the WSCF. The freedom to take risks and to make mistakes, to be gloriously wrong, is one which the WSCF should cherish in the interests of the Church as a whole. It can only usefully exercise that freedom if it has the confidence of church leaders, of course, and this I believe it has. Problems (apparent at Rangoon) immediately arise for the WSCF itself: it cannot be only a vehicle for the expression of *student* opinion. Most "students" in some Asian countries are too young even at graduation to have significantly articulated opinions. In all countries students (if by that we continue to mean undergraduates) only reach maturity at such a late period in their course that continuity of thought in a student organization is impossible to achieve. So the WSCF must understand itself in this project as something more than a student body. It is rather a fellowship of undergraduates and young graduates who, together with those whom they recognize as speaking to their condition and for them, constitute a community of thought and prayer of a questioning sort. They seek to live by the faith by which the Church lives, but in such a way as constantly to be asking the fundamental question of every church enterprise. Something of what we expect the university to do for the wider community in which it is placed — pass on to its younger members the accumulated wisdom of the community and the values by which it would have them live, but in such a way that that accumulated store of wisdom is itself examined and those values themselves criticized — that we should expect the WSCF to do in a small way for the ecumenical and missionary movement. It is a daring thought, but not one that is altogether new in the history of the Federation.

3. The resources of the WSCF in staff and money — though not in senior friends in the life of the churches — are perilously small for such an undertaking. Yet I gain confidence both from their quality and their number. I doubt if the WSCF has ever had as many Secretaries in Asia (or the national Movements in Asia as many full- or part-time officers) as at present. If the WSCF and the national Movements can keep these men and women, or their successors, there for the next five years much might be accomplished. If the staff position is weakened much, good initiative may be lost. And Asia ought to continue at least in large part to make the pace during the next few years.

Many countries of Asia have experienced something like a cultural renaissance in the last ten years. I use the word "cultural" advisedly, for what has been happening goes deeper and is more varied than what can be described in social, political, or artistic

terms, although it manifests itself in all these ways. With all this the young Asian Christian feels himself to be identified, and yet from some of it he feels himself to be cut off, or at least put into a relation of tension by his membership of the Church as he has known it, and as he knows it at present. The language of the Church's exhortation — moral and spiritual — is still too alien. This is, I think, the cultural background of the often-made accusation of Westernization. The accusation will have to be understood in the West, and its content will have to be defined more clearly by Asian Christians. At Rangoon a number of different ideas of Westernization were found jostling each other :

(a) There is the obvious point that too much of the external appearance of church life is Western. This creates an impression of identity between Christianity and Western ways of life which is particularly unfortunate at this stage in Asia's history. Much of this reaction is one in which the Westerner can share fully : Judson Chapel, on the campus of the University of Rangoon, might be a Baptist Church built anywhere in the English-speaking world of the late nineteenth century. This was very largely true too of the Anglican Church in which we worshipped at St. John's, and of the very English-looking Anglican cathedral. If the revolt against Westernization were to clear out of the way some of the sentimental hymns and tunes which appear to be popular in Asia, it would be a service to us all.

(b) At a somewhat deeper level, Western theology no doubt appears to some as being altogether too much a domestic affair — theologian refuting theologian, Christians of one confession defending themselves against misinterpretation by those of other Christian traditions, this generation reacting against its predecessors. Too little of the theology of the West reflects a real engagement with this world, and in particular with this new Asian world. One gets the impression that what has been said in the West about nationhood has not been heard, understood, or assimilated by the best Christian students in the East ; and that in any case it probably presupposes a post-Christian society such as we have in Western Europe. As far as an assessment of the phenomenon of religion is concerned, especially of the traditional religions in their renascent form, Eastern Christians have on the whole looked to the West in vain. The warnings against false approaches issued by Kraemer in *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World* had for too long been interpreted as a red light against any serious discussion between the adherents of different faiths.

(c) Related to both these levels is a certain confusion about the attitude which a Christian should adopt towards man's cultural activities. Most countries in Asia are experiencing a considerable revival of native culture. By what criterion does a Christian assess this, and to what degree and in what ways can he identify himself with it? Once more Western Christians have been preoccupied chiefly with the fate of a Christian or post-Christian culture. M. M. Thomas stimulatingly drew on Cochrane's *Christianity and Classical Culture* to illuminate the predicament of the Christian in Asia today. Too few of those who are expert on the life of the early Church have, however, any interest in the cultural problems facing the Church in Africa or Asia today; and too few of those who have gone from the West to Asia as missionaries have had the technical knowledge and sensibility to appreciate and judge non-Christian cultures. Certainly my impression is that — by and large — the Western missionary has not left behind him in Asia a Church equipped with leaders interested and capable of making judgments in the sphere of culture.

(d) Perhaps at the most profound level the debate about Westernization is a repetition in an Eastern context of a question about the validity of the Western intellectual tradition which is going on all the time in Europe itself. When a Japanese professor (Nakagawa) attacks the reliance of Western Christian thinkers upon the historical method, he speaks the language of Bultmann and Gogarten. When an Indian (M. M. Thomas) defends the view that Christian faith has a specific and characteristic contribution to make to man's cultural life, namely the meaningfulness of history and the significance of the human person, he speaks the language of the Western tradition regaining confidence in itself and now doing so (among some Indian intellectuals at least) in an Asian setting.

If, then, the Rangoon conference is to be taken as giving a true reflection of the interests and concerns of Asian Christians, I should fasten on three questions which require considerable attention if we are to understand aright the life and mission of the Church in mid-twentieth century Asia:

1. the significance of nationhood;
2. the Christian understanding and assessment of human culture, especially as it emerges now in a world touched by the West but rediscovering its ancient roots;
3. the Christian encounter with non-Christian religions in their renascent forms.

It was surprising how little discussion took place on some other issues: e.g. the threat of atomic warfare (perhaps because it was realistically assumed that decisions for or against the use of nuclear weapons will not be taken in Asia); communism (perhaps because of the absence of delegates from China); the problems of under-developed countries growing relatively poorer and poorer while the rich grow richer. Perhaps it was a weakness of the conference that these matters were not sufficiently aired. Certainly we could have done with a lot more political description and analysis, a heap more social concern. But if the neglect of these questions results in a new awareness of the cultural problems which underlie political questions in the string of smaller nations from Ceylon to the Philippines, the neglect will not have been all loss. It was probably a very good thing that the conference took place in Burma rather than in India or Japan, and that most delegates paid a visit — however fleeting — to Thailand on their way to or from Rangoon. One felt that the smaller Asian nations were beginning to hit the imagination of the Federation. I hope that this will not be lost sight of at Strasbourg, for I think it is probably important for Africa as well as Asia.

One Westerner said that, compared to a meeting of representatives of missionary societies in the West, this gathering was marked by some confidence and hope as well as by a sense of urgency deriving from the nature of the Gospel. In place of an attitude of "Doors are closing before us", one felt that the Church is there *in* the situation: there is no need to regard as finally disastrous circumstances in which the Gospel cannot be brought from one country to another, if the Church is already there. This acceptance of their environment was seen as an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord of the world, and that meant of their world, where they are.

In turn this led to (or coincided with, or provided the theological justification for) a positive attitude towards "the Asian revolution" both on its political and on its cultural side. This positive note, it will be seen, cannot be the only note struck by the Christian; but a serious attempt is beginning to be made to learn when he sees what God is doing with his nation's history.

The emphasis, therefore, lay much upon Christian obedience in the world. The Bible study helped to show how New Testament ethics are secular rather than ecclesiastical, and "secular holiness" became a matter of considerable preoccupation for the conference. How am I, a citizen, a member of my society, to acknowledge then this Lordship of Christ? That question immediately cuts across the preoccupations of the "mission compound mentality". The

question is not about the survival of an enterprise, however honourable, but about obedience in the world.

Another way of putting this would be to say that Rangoon marked an important step away from high-biblicism or high-churchmanship into a high view of God's dealings with the world: high worldmanship. For a long time at ecumenical conferences (including some of those of the WSCF) there has been a hidden competition between delegates on the seriousness with which they take the Bible and the Church. Perhaps at Rangoon in a good sense we were able to take the Bible and the Church for granted: of course these are the centres from which we live. But the place we live is the place where Christ reigns, in the world. The refusal of theologians to identify Kingdom and Church is now bearing fruit, and some uncomfortable questions will be addressed to the ecclesiastically-minded.

Report of the Working Party on the Form and Nature of the Congregation

WSCF Conference, Rangoon, 1959

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Statement of the issues

Does the empirical church conform to the vision of the Church we see in the Bible? Do the form and life of our local congregations bear testimony to the message we proclaim? It is evident that there exists today a discrepancy between the forms and patterns of local church life and the revealed nature of the congregation. This discrepancy is one of the major weaknesses in the life and mission of the Church in Asia. A penitent re-examination of the structure and witness of the local congregation is therefore important and urgent.

2. Theological basis

a) Is it true that only the "invisible" Church matters and that the empirical churches with all their patterns and structures of church life remain an unimportant by-product? Or is it so that *the corporate, institutional element* is even a betrayal of the true Church? Or is this element essential in the life and mission of the Church?

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus called the twelve disciples and through them the Apostolic Church — the true Israel. Christ wants to live and fulfil his mission in and through his Body, the Church. The group agreed, therefore, that this corporate element is essential and not accidental in the life and mission of the Church. Each congregation is a local expression of this universal People of God, of the Body of Christ, and the Community of the Holy Spirit. But how and to what degree does this corporate nature of the congregation find expression in definite forms and structures ?

b) Christ has called the Apostles and through them the Apostolic Church, (i) to be with him, (ii) in order to send them out (Mark 3 : 14). In other words the Church has a *twofold task* ; (i) to be the city on the mountain, foreshadowing in its worship, common life, service, and witness, the coming Kingdom ; (ii) to be the salt of the earth in and through the ministering and missionary presence of the church members sent out into the world. This twofold calling is primary. And the patterns and structures of church life are means to express and foster this twofold task.

In the light of this twofold character of the Church's nature and function, how shall we evaluate the following three familiar attitudes towards church structure : (i) The absolutist attitude claims that one particular church pattern is the only true one. This attitude is right in that it maintains that there are given constituent elements in the nature and form of the Church ; however, it over-emphasizes this truth by making the same absolute claims also for such patterns and structures as have developed or were given in a peculiar concrete cultural and historical environment. (ii) The traditionalist attitude keeps in all environments the same old, inherited pattern, acknowledging, however, that other patterns are possible. This attitude witnesses rightly to the fact that we are living today within the continuity of the Church of all ages. However, it overstresses this truth, and therefore becomes blind to the recreating activity of the living God both in his Church and his world. (iii) The relativist attitude conforms church patterns consciously or unconsciously to the patterns of each new environment. This attitude is right in so far as it remains sensitive to what God is doing in both the Church and the world, and in so far as it stresses the fact that God's people has to be present in the midst of God's world ! However it overemphasizes this truth by belittling or denying those patterns and structures which are given to the Church of all ages and in all places.

What are these given structural elements which must be maintained in Christ's Church whatever its changing environment might be? The group mentioned such elements as the basic rhythm of the Church being called out of the world to constitute the city on the mountain, the *ecclesia* (the assembly of the citizens of the Kingdom), and of being sent out into the world to be the salt of the earth; the ministry of word and sacrament; the manifestation of the unity we are given in Christ, etc. This list cannot be completed because there is not yet full agreement among the churches about these given constituent elements (there are, for instance, such controversial issues as the apostolic succession, etc.).

The group saw as the right attitude a combination of the true elements of the above-mentioned three attitudes. It is an attitude which, while maintaining the constituent structural elements, and thus safeguarding the true continuity of the Church, at the same time is responsive to God's recreating activity in his Church and his world. This implies that in each new cultural and historical situation we have to discern the new concrete and obedient expression of the given basic structure of the Church. It is therefore necessary to make an unbiased study of the present structures in both the Church and the society of Asian countries today.

3. *Present structures in Asian Church and society*

a) Institutions, patterns, and structures have a natural tendency to grow more and more rigid. The institutional element in church life is also affected by this sociological law of "institutionalization", stagnation, or sclerosis. This process can be seen, for instance, in the fact that some congregations in big industrialized cities keep on celebrating harvest festivals which were meaningful for their peasant forefathers, but are of little relevance to office and factory workers. Should they not celebrate an industrial Sunday? Another example is that in many poor areas of Asia the Western pattern of a full-time paid ministry is kept up. Often this is done at the expense of paralyzing the spontaneous growth of such congregations, because all the energy is now channelled into the raising of funds. A third example is the uncritical transplantation of Western forms of worship to Asia. However, we must be aware of the fact that indigenization leads easily into the above-mentioned relativist attitude, and that Christian worship (e.g. the reading of the Old Testament) may often be as alien to Westerners as to Asians.

b) But besides the process of sclerosis another force is working in the local congregations, the renewing power of the Holy

Spirit. Well-known examples of this are the church reunion in South India and other Asian reunion schemes, the new attempts in industrial evangelism in Japan, the pioneering role the Indonesian SCM plays in student politics, and the new approach to serving rural India through the work of Christian ashrams.

B. THE CITY ON THE MOUNTAIN AND THE SALT OF THE EARTH

In this chapter some important aspects of the life and mission of the Church are examined, i.e., worship, teaching, service, witness, and community. Each aspect is examined from the viewpoint of both the Church assembled and the Church sent out into the world. First (a) the relationship of these two phases of church life is stated; then each aspect is seen (b) from the viewpoint of the Church as the city on the mountain, and (c) from the viewpoint of the Church as the salt of the earth. In all this, the basic question remains: what patterns and structures express and foster the Church's twofold task in this particular aspect?

1. *Worship and work*

a) "Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive honour and glory and power; for thou didst create all things and because of thy will they are and were created" (Rev. 4: 11). Christian worship is an acknowledgement and manifestation of the absolute "worthship" of Almighty God, the Creator and Redeemer of this world. It is an offering of ourselves and of the whole creation to God in Jesus Christ. Thus worship and work are closely interrelated. All work must be offered to God, and all work must become worship, deriving its true perspective from God. In how far are Asian churches aware of this close interdependence between the worship of praise of the assembled congregation and the worship of obedience of God's people when disseminated in the world?

b) Asian churches tend to have a one-sided other-worldly attitude. When assembling for *worship* Christians often forget the hard facts in power-politics, national reconstruction, etc., and delve into a purely "religious" atmosphere. But we should bring the glories, sins, needs, and frustrations of this "secular" world before God. Perhaps this could best be done by allowing the laity to join in leading the prayers of thanksgiving, confession, petition, and intercession, because the laity often knows and shares the hopes and fears of this world more than ordained ministers and professional church-workers.

But in worship we not only bring the world before God ; God also reveals to us his judgments, promises, and his will for us and our work in the world. This revelation concerns not only the religious sector of life, but major decisions of faith which will have to be made in such "secular" realms as politics, economics, family life, etc. The preaching and the celebration of the sacraments should therefore be closely related to the everyday life in the work-a-day world. A sermon prepared together with a group of laymen in different walks of life runs less danger of being unrelated to daily work than a sermon prepared exclusively in the study of the pastor.

"When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification" (I Cor. 14 : 26). This truly corporate worship is not possible in large city congregations where the members do not know one another. The development of house-churches, small Bible study groups, and SCM work groups in the university is one way of building up true worshipping communities.

c) Christian *work* is not exclusively church-related work. Such "secular" professions as policeman, farmer, businessman, and housewife are no less holy than church work or service in Christian institutions, if in every decision we are guided by the question : "What is God's will ? How can I manifest Christ's love and lordship ?"

But Christians must be helped to see the implications of Christian faith for their particular profession and life situation. The "eyes of faith" which have been enlightened in the corporate worship must be used to discern each next step of obedience in the world. Christians working in the same professional and social group can best help one another in this. They must discern where the Lord is at work. And when joining in his work they must be aware of the fact that to become a co-worker with God means inevitably to suffer with Christ.

2. *Learning from God and learning from our neighbour*

a) How can we "remain steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching" (Acts 2 : 42), and at the same time remain open to what God wants us to say through our neighbours and the events of our present life and historic situation ? These two ways of listening and learning are closely interrelated, and as Christians we may not neglect either of them. But our learning from God through the biblical message is primary : it judges as well as enlightens our learning from our neighbours.

This process of learning has not only the intellectual side which is emphasized below. We can learn in an even deeper way through worship and sacraments and through living together daily with our neighbours.

b) Our *learning from God* through the biblical teaching as interpreted to us through the Holy Spirit and the Church is primary. Therefore it must have an "independent" place in the structures and patterns of church life. ("Independent" does not mean, however, "unrelated" to the concrete environment !) Bible study, teaching, and preaching are essential in the life of the Church of all ages and places. Where this free learning from God is falsified or prohibited, the Church can no more fulfil her mission. (For instance, will it limit the freedom of the preacher to announce God's judgment, promise, and will, if he is directly dependent on his congregation, financially or otherwise ?)

Such true learning from God must be safeguarded and fostered by the structures of the Church. Some churches seek to do this by the apostolic succession of a teaching ministry. Others seek more in the direction of developing Bible study and biblical teaching in the congregations. Most churches see now the need for a group of well-trained theologians who — in dialogue with the laity and the eminent spirits of their time — seek to discern in each new situation God's answer to the challenges of our time.

c) True learning from God is never unrelated to the situation in which we find ourselves. Therefore we must also *learn from our neighbours*. This process of listening to and learning from our neighbours happens mainly in the phase when the Church is disseminated in the world. Christians should therefore be helped to see everyday life with "eyes of faith" and to listen to their neighbours with "ears of faith". They should be helped to read their newspapers in the context of the history of salvation which is revealed to us in the Bible and summarized in the Creeds.

But should our patterns of church life not also provide for corporate listening to what God is doing in Asia today ? The Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in India is such a pattern. Similar patterns might be developed in local congregations, for instance, study groups with Christians and non-Christians, lectures by prominent personalities of local politics, even if they are non-Christians, reconstruction schemes, etc. This kind of learning should lead the congregation to informed acts of service and witness.

3. *Corporate service and serving presence in the world*

a) The Church must express its calling to be the servant people of its Servant Lord both corporately by Christian institutions and movements and individually by the serving presence of Christians in "secular" jobs and organizations. The knowledge of such Christians fully involved in the "secular" development schemes of Asian countries is needed, if the Church wants to render today a truly prophetic service in her institutions. These Christian institutions and movements have to set a new pattern of service. But if the Church serves exclusively through its own institutions, Christians tend to become alienated from the main stream of life in the non-Christian Asian countries. Many Christians must therefore go out and serve in a "secular" environment, renewing the general patterns and structures of society from within.

b) With regard to the *corporate service* of the Church through institutions and movements, we have to ask: (i) What are the major Christian institutions and movements in our country? (ii) Are they necessary and relevant in the present historic and social situation of our country and do they continue to pioneer in developing new patterns of service? (iii) What is their relation to the Church as a local congregation? (Are they totally or partly supported by the Church, or are they a spontaneous initiative of individual Christians outside the normal structures of the Church? Is their leadership really in the hands of Christians?) (iv) What role do Christian Student Movements play in the corporate service of the Church to the world of the university? (v) In the light of the growth of welfare states in Asia, a re-evaluation of all Christian institutions and movements becomes imperative: which institutions and movements should we let die? And what new prophetic forms of corporate service must be explored?

c) What is most needed with regard to the *serving presence* of individual Christians in "secular" jobs and organizations is a recovery of the sense of vocation. Students should be challenged to enter the Five Year Plans and the reconstruction and development schemes of their nations, and to do their jobs there as a Christian vocation.

Such serving presence in the midst of the world will often involve Christians in most difficult decisions, where the choice is not between a bad and a good act, but between two equally questionable decisions and sometimes between an easy way out and much suffering. Wherever possible, Christians working in the same situation or organization should sometimes come together as interdenominational

"spiritual nuclei", without, however, becoming closed circles or interest groups. Equally important is the relationship of such Christians serving out in the world with a local congregation. They can best bring the concerns of the world before God, and they need even more than others the support of the word and the sacraments as well as of continuing intercession.

4. *Corporate witness and "gossiping the Gospel"*

a) Organized evangelistic efforts are not the only means of evangelism. Equally important is the "gossiping of the Gospel", i.e. the spontaneous witness to Christ in everyday conversations with our neighbours and fellow-workers. The importance of this lies not only in its direct evangelistic effect, but also in the opportunity to come to know the living faiths and questions of those we meet. Corporate evangelism soon becomes empty declamation without such learning and listening.

b) Each congregation is called to be a witnessing community. Its entire life and work must have a direct or indirect evangelistic purpose and effect. But this dimension must also find expression in organized evangelistic efforts. In the changing situation in Asia what are the best ways of corporate evangelism? Do the traditional means take sufficient account of the peculiar patterns of society and ways of communication in your country? In how far does traditional corporate evangelism really involve the entire congregation?

c) "The layman is the evangelist of the twentieth century." This quotation from Evanston is particularly relevant to the Asian situation. It is amazing how far one can go in "gossiping the Gospel" from within a group, if one fully shares its daily hopes and fears. Therefore the patterns of the congregations should provide far more opportunities to help lay men and women "to give reason for the hope that is in them" (I Peter 3: 15).

5. *The community of the saints and the community with our neighbours*

a) The Christian community life is a training ground for the love of our neighbours. And through this new relationship to our neighbours we love them into the community of the saints.

b) In this time of rapid social change we are understanding anew the primary importance of Christian community life. What patterns of community life express best this world-wide and continuous communion with Christians of all ages and places? How can

this community be built up in an increasingly mobile industrial society? What patterns of community life safeguard the congregation from becoming a closed communal group?

c) Christians can never write off the world and their neighbours, for Christ awaits them in the least of their brethren (Matt. 25 : 31-46). What patterns and attitudes in our congregations hinder this expectancy of meeting Christ outside the walls of the church? What patterns can be suggested for providing half-way houses where Christians can meet non-Christians and nominal Christians? What is the role of Student Christian Movements in this respect?

C. THE PEOPLE OF GOD AND "THE OTHER LAITY"

The above vision of the form and nature of the congregation has many deep implications for the role of the laity and the re-evaluation of the function of those set apart for special ministries in the Church. These concrete implications must be discovered in each new historic and cultural environment. The following questions might stimulate such a discovery.

1. *The rediscovery of the laity*

The major task of the laity is not to do something for the Church but rather to be the Church in the world. However:

a) What can be done to prevent Christians who are fully involved in the main stream of life in Asian society from gradually losing contact with the life and worship of a local congregation?

b) How can we prevent laymen who are actively involved in the life of a local congregation from gradually getting a clerical outlook?

c) How can laymen be helped to see their "secular" profession as a Christian vocation?

d) What patterns should be developed in Asia to help laymen to see the implications of Christian faith in making decisions in their daily life and work?

2. *The re-evaluation of the function of those set apart*

Those set apart within God's people for a special ministry (clergy and professional church-workers) do not cease to share in the general ministry of God's people in God's world. But they have a specific function in this ministry and are therefore now sometimes referred to as "the other laity".

a) Do you agree that the main function of those set apart is to call God's people to their ministry in the world and to help them by the administration of the sacraments, through preaching, doctrinal teaching, and pastoral guidance ?

b) If you agree with the statement in the above question, what should be the daily work schedule of those set apart ?

c) What type of training do they require ?

d) In the New Testament there are different lists of the ministries of those set apart. How can we discern the ministries which Christ gives to his Church today in Asia ?

e) What are the advantages, limitations, and dangers of professionalism in the Church ? Are full-time church-workers most needed in large and strong local churches or in small and weak congregations ?

f) What are the advantages, limitations, and dangers of voluntary pastors and church-workers in the Asian churches ?

D. THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT IN THE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

1. *Introduction*

The Student Christian Movement as a congregation within the university community must fulfil the twofold task of being a city on the mountain and the salt of the world of the university. It should aim to contain in its fellowship and work all Christian members of the university, students and staff. Where other Christian bodies exist, efforts should be made to manifest the oneness of the Body of Christ by seeking union or co-operation. As it is primarily a student community, the leadership of the SCM should remain in the hands of the students, with the staff giving encouragement and advice. The SCM must remain an open community, welcoming the membership of non-Christian students. However, its Christian character and purpose must be maintained by a strong Christian leadership.

2. *The gathered community*

In its corporate life the SCM must have a program of regular worship including services where the whole Body of Christ can worship within the university. To this effect Holy Communion should be celebrated where denominational rules permit. Bible study should include three elements : (a) doctrinal ; (b) in relation

to the world, on the university, local, national, and international levels; here the combined use of newspapers and Bible is to be commended; (c) in relation to the other faiths found in the particular country. In Asia today it is clear that the SCM should sponsor political discussions and be prepared for committed action. Meetings could be arranged with groups holding different ideologies or faiths, for example, communist groups, Buddhist unions. In all things the Movement should foster mutual understanding and a spirit of fellowship.

Social activities, times of special evangelistic activities, conferences and camps still seem to be essential elements in the life of our Student Christian Movement.

3. *The dispersed community*

Here the calling of the individual SCM members was seen to be primarily one of dedicated study. However, members should also feel a responsibility to take part in Student Union activities and clubs. Christian students should be encouraged to take responsible leadership in these activities which might involve them in costly decisions. At times SCM members should be prepared to take a bold stand against unfair activities. The Christian should try to create a feeling of fellowship among students of different races and creeds.

4. *Relation with the churches*

Its membership is drawn from the churches, and the SCM should never lead students to neglect their responsibilities to their local churches. They should play a leading part in the renewal of the church life and in movements for church union. The SCM and the churches should have mutual relationships regarding leadership, financial assistance, and social work.

Although in a sense it is separate from the churches, the life of the SCM should be such that it fosters student leadership and responsibility in the churches.

Report of the Working Party on the New Man in Christ and the Faiths of Mankind

WSCF Conference, Rangoon, 1959

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Lordship of Christ

The working party took as its point of entry to the discussion the basic Christian affirmation that Jesus Christ is Lord. "We preach Jesus as Lord and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Our concern is with what we should proclaim: the work of conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Over whom is Jesus Christ the Lord? Some would say that it is possible to speak of Christ's Lordship over and within the structures of faith and worship of other religions; and they believe that it is possible to discern the Lord's judging and redeeming hand in the changes of emphasis and outlook apparent among these religions today. Others would prefer to speak of how Christ is the Lord of men who do not know him by name, and of how through their faltering questions and answers to life's mysteries he is addressing them and drawing them to himself. It is with them as men who have sinned, have hoped, have rebelled, and have despaired that Christ has dealt, is dealing, and will deal at the end. But whatever the differences between us in approach — whether we prefer to speak of Christ's Lordship over religions or over men in their religious aspirations — all agree that Christian students are called upon to study afresh the traditional religions, especially in their resurgence, and the new faiths of mankind, and are called continually to seek to meet, to understand, and to speak of our Christian faith and our common humanity with our neighbours for whom Christ died and whom he has given to us to love as ourselves.

To what do we refer when we speak of the Lordship of Christ?

1. He is the Lord as the pre-existent Word of God through whom all things were made and by whom all things are sustained in being, and apart from whom there is no truth. So far all would agree. Some would wish to add that if other religions exist, it is

because the eternal Word of God keeps them in being : if there is any truth in them it is because he speaks to them. Others would simply wish to assert that at no time is God not addressing his Word to men whom he has made for himself. It may be that other religions are evidence of this divine activity ; it may not be so.

2. He is the Lord by virtue of his incarnation, death, and resurrection. The work of Christ has world-wide meaning, and therefore it has a meaning even for those who do not acknowledge him. He has redeemed men of other faiths — as he has redeemed us — in the midst of their sin. There is room for discussion whether it is possible to discern the Word of redemption in religious systems other than Christianity. There is no room for doubt that God wills that all men should know of his love and grace in Jesus Christ.

3. He is Lord because in the end all things will be put under his feet. Then every man will know with whom he has had to do. And some believe that then too non-Christian religions will be shown as leading to Christ, and that then they will receive their correction not by destruction but by purification and redemption.

B. *The New Man in Christ*

Jesus Christ the Lord is also the New Man, the last Adam, the King and Head of our human race. He is the “proper” or representative man. In him the sin and guilt of man is taken away.

Christ alone is the Redeemer, but he is not alone. “As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Of this new humanity the Church is a kind of first fruits. Here in the Church is mankind which knows the name of the world’s Redeemer.

The Church is the fellowship of those who have been incorporated into Christ by baptism. It is the openly consecrated part of humanity, giving a clue to the destiny of the whole.

The Church, therefore, confronts mankind, not with a message contrary to its true purpose, but with “the mystery hidden from all generations but now brought to light, which is : Christ in you, the hope of glory”. It speaks to men of other faiths not of a Lord who is afar off and has been brought to them from afar off — from the West, or from Palestine, although there he took flesh — but of a Word which is near them, in their hearts and lives ; and it speaks, therefore, of the compulsion which rests upon all of us to obey that Word. Only thus, by the obedience of faith, can we become what we are, members of the new humanity in Jesus Christ.

II. TRADITIONAL FAITHS IN THEIR RENASCENT FORMS

We believe that Christ is at work in the renaissance of the traditional faiths. They begin to reinterpret their religion in the light of the present historical situation, and a theology of society is being developed, e.g. an emphasis on social service and the dignity of man. This new orientation makes the confrontation between Christians and adherents of other faiths more urgent and the choice by adherents of other faiths for or against Christ more inescapable.

A. What does the Lordship of Christ mean for them ?

1. Even in the midst of the renaissance there is a basic denial of the Lordship of Christ. As long as they maintain this denial, they keep themselves outside of the new humanity offered in Christ.

2. We must, however, maintain also that Christ is the fulfilment of their search for truth and eternal life. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, which they seek. This fulfilment is not a total affirmation, but nevertheless an answer to the aspirations of men expressed in these religions.

3. In the case of Judaism we recognize a special revelation of God through history. But we must remember that even this prepared history could be fulfilled only in the cross. Here we see clearly how the fulfilment goes through denial in God's dealing with men.

B. What does this mean for us in our relations to men of other religions ?

1. We are all equally concerned that men of other religions or of none at all should be brought to the point where they are called to make a decision for or against Jesus Christ as the Lord of all.

A genuine conversion means the personal acknowledgement and acceptance of the person of Jesus Christ as Lord. (Historical associations of the word "conversion" make it necessary to ask whether the word itself should be kept. On the other hand, it has a certain cutting edge.) Conversion certainly also means the incorporation into his Body, the Church. But there is a great deal of confusion in our minds as to where the Church is to be found. It is related to the churches as they exist, but we have not been able to find the true relation between the Church and churches. Nor are we clear about the boundary of the Church in relation to men of other faiths, especially men who have been led to love Christ

but refused to join one of the churches. So that while conversion should mean acceptance of Christ in his Church, its implications are seen with different emphases by different people in our group. In this connection we raised the following questions :

- a) What is the meaning of conversion to Christ and his Church ?
- b) What is the relation between the Church and the churches ?
- c) What is the boundary of the Church ?

2. In any case we have to confront them with Jesus Christ as their Lord. We should not base our evangelism on what we think are weak points or errors in their religions ; but rather let their acknowledgement of Christ lead them to recognize by themselves their former idolatry as well as fulfilment.

3. In accepting Christ and his Church the convert must not be expected to accept uncritically the Church which is so often an expression of Western culture.

4. We must also remember that Christ is, through the renaissance of traditional religions, judging the Church and calling it to repentance and renewal.

5. Our attitude should be one of love and acceptance rather than of judgment. Let God who loved the world in Jesus Christ also be its Judge.

III. MODERN SECULARISM

Secularism seems to be one of the most powerful forces in the modern world. The very fact that it challenges likewise the Church, the religions, and philosophical systems indicates that secularism is not just a way of life, but something like a new religion. It is, however, difficult to approach secularism as a system with certain credal affirmations. Sometimes it seems to be purely materialistic, sometimes nihilistic or believing scientism, sometimes merely indifferent towards all religions. Although there can be no doubt that there are religious implications in secularism, secularism itself is very often unconscious of it. Thus it is necessary in dealing with it to look into its religious implications and at the same time to come to grips with its basic practical emphasis. Under these circumstances, we felt the best approach would be for us to take secularism primarily as that way of life which is brought about by the technical revolution and is spreading rapidly over the whole world, under the guiding question in what way Christ is Lord over secularism.

This should of course be, not a substitute for, but rather an encouragement to deeper analytic study of its implications and self-understanding.

It is suggested that secularism be dealt with under a threefold dialectic: under a "yes", as God is creator of the world and all things in it; under a "no", as secularism belongs to, and is part of the fallen world, subject to sin and rebellion against God; and under a final "yes", as this fallen world is "in principle" redeemed in Christ and is to be brought to his feet in the final consummation.

A. It is clear that the technological revolution is primarily a gift from God to sustain life among men, especially the nations of Asia, the majority of which have lived under the constant threat of famine and plague, and hope for a change of these conditions through the technical revolution. The secular way of life can be understood in this respect as men taking the position towards the world as given to them by God. Man, who was made to have power over the rest of this created world, expresses his true nature by control exercised through scientific techniques. Further, man has through his new-found powers been set free from superstition and idolatry. He no longer presupposes that the world of nature is under the sway of alien demonic forces. He does not use mystic rites to placate the forces of nature — he seeks to understand them. Christ's power of exorcism is here at work.

B. The technological revolution is part of the fallen world. It provides not only means for the welfare of man but also for his utter destruction. The secular way of life has a full share in this ambiguity. It tends to make man denounce his position as creature and to believe in himself as his own lord, resulting in destructive influences on society and his becoming subject to a formerly unknown hunger after a greater and greater share in technical things. The development gets out of the control of man, and the secular way of life seems to acknowledge new demonic powers in this development. A new idolatry of technical goods is emerging.

C. The technical revolution and the subsequent secular way of life must be seen under the redeeming power of Christ. But apparently the churches have until now largely failed to see the situation in this way. In technically advanced countries the secularized people among the Christians have lost contact with the churches. The churches tend to preserve forms of teaching, worship, and community, as they were in use before the revolution, and are unable to preach Christ relevantly in the modern world. The ethical teaching of the Bible is not applied to the world of the technical revolu-

tion. The fear and anxiety of the people following the secular way of life are not answered in the Church — neither the concrete fear of the hydrogen bomb nor the general anxiety of life becoming meaningless. All kinds of sects having ready answers are growing vigorously.

For the average person, however, Sunday is a day of picnics outside the cities, of sports or any other kind of recreation, and even if such people have in past years of great distress found comfort in the church services, they cannot find it there any longer; the services are no longer a place of joy and recreation for the secularized people, and they do not expect any "good news" from them. This situation implies questions to the theology of worship and the ethical teaching of the Church and to the social structure of each congregation, as indeed it does also to the life and witness of our SCMs.

IV. QUESTIONS

A. *To the Church's theologians*

1. In what way is Christ's redemptive act effectively present in the technical revolution?
2. What is the message of the New Man in Christ to secularized man?
3. Is Christ casting the new demons out of the structures and developments of the technical world? If so, how? If not, why not?

B. *To the Church as a community*

The Church can conform totally to this world, but then it loses its grasp of its renewing power. The Church can be transformed by the renewing of its mind.

1. What does this imply for the Church as a whole in the countries of Asia now in the midst of a technical revolution?
2. What is the right kind of secularization which the local congregation should undergo? What would be the wrong kind?
3. Can you think of notable examples whereby Christians have at the same time tried to live more deeply the new life in Christ *and* in the world for which he died?

C. *To the SCM as the Christian community in the university*

What is the task of the SCM in a university predominantly technological in its interest?

1. With those who are enthusiastic about the revolution ?
2. With those who are only interested in getting good (government) jobs ?
3. With those who are openly cynical ?
4. With those who are indifferent ?

D. To the individual Christian

1. What is your place in the technical revolution ?
2. Do you pray differently from Christians of other generations because you live in the technical age ?

Next Steps in Asia in the Study of "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men"

*An excerpt from an East Asia Christian Conference Commission Report
on "The Witness of the Churches within and beyond their Frontiers"
May 1959*

1. Our primary concern in Asian lands is to witness faithfully to the Gospel of God in Jesus Christ. We are set in the midst of living non-Christian religions which today are surging with new life. Our task is to present the claims of the Christian faith in the conviction of its universal validity for all times and its specific relevancy for our times. We should be clear in our mind as to the relation of the Gospel to the world of other religions in which men live and have their being.

This demand forced itself on the attention of the Christian Church in our lands as a matter of pressing need at the International Missionary Council meeting at Tambaram (1938). Since Tambaram the tendency has been to emphasize the revelation aspect of the Gospel as totally other, and discontinuous with other religions. This theological approach has been a needed corrective. But one consequence of this emphasis is that it makes it difficult, if not impossible, for us to enter into fruitful conversation with men of other faiths. Without such confrontation Christian witness cannot be arrestingly relevant and meaningful, especially in our present situation in Asia.

Asian conditions have changed beyond all recognition since Tambaram. Modern Asian man is concerned with revolutionary

plans for the remaking of society, for the realization of personal values, and the achievement of specific national goals in present history. He is searching for spiritual foundations for this new world in the making, and he does not always find the needed dynamic of faith in the traditional religion of his fathers. Modern religious movements in the historic religions of Asia stand for two things — on the one hand, there are indications of the crises brought about by the inadequacy of their traditional and theological beliefs ; on the other hand, they represent efforts to recover the support of faith, by a radical renewal of their beliefs in terms of present-day demands and needs. Religion and society in Asian lands are closely interrelated. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has to be proclaimed as the good news of God who is concerned with man in his relations to other men and to the world of things.

2. Therefore we feel convinced that today we need a new approach to our study of "The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men". *This approach should be from the Christian understanding of the nature and destiny of man.* In Asian churches we suggest that prominence should be given to the following aspects of the study :

a) The search for new foundations in non-Christian religions as reflected by the values that modern man in Asia accepts and seeks to realize.

b) The biblical understanding of man and society in comparison with changing non-Christian concepts as revealed in the prevailing forms of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, etc., in Asian lands today.

c) The creative interaction of changing social ideals and renascent religious beliefs on each other, which makes it compellingly necessary for us to study all Asian religions, including our own, with reference to Asian society.

d) The imperative need for relating the insights of this study to the everyday life of the local congregation of Christians in our lands, so that they may courageously venture, in their patterns of life and witness, to steer clear of the perils of ghettoism on the one hand and the danger of syncretism on the other.

3. With specific references to the study document on this subject prepared by the Study Department of the World Council of Churches, we would single out the following issues as of special relevance to the Asian situation :

a) The relation of the "once-for-all-ness" of the redemptive act in Jesus Christ to God's concern in the redemption of men of other religions.

b) The ways in which God is at work in the non-Christian religions.

c) Other religions as themselves "in a positive way drawing upon the redemptive activity of God, and, at the same time, negatively, using God's power against God".

d) The conception of man as under the grip of "powers" which prevent him from heeding the Gospel and reaching the decision for Christ.

e) The significance of the eschatological view of the Gospel and its relevancy to the hopes created by nascent Asian religions.

f) The Christian understanding of conscience and of "conversion" as in fact "a radical replacement of all other authority over man's conscience by the sole authority of Jesus Christ".

The Commission gave enthusiastic support to the proposal to hold a series of consultations in regard to this study with special reference to Buddhist, Islamic, and Chinese religions in our area, to be organized jointly by the EACC and WCC Study Department during 1960, in preparation for the next WCC Assembly.

4. In regard to the Study Centres in Asia, the Commission heard with approval of the work done in them since their inception.

We wish to emphasize the significance of the work being done in these Centres, and ask EACC to give them all encouragement. In particular we urge that the Study Centres take seriously the necessity of the study of religion in relation to society.

Means should be devised by which the work of the various Study Centres can be co-ordinated. For instance, the directors of the Centres should meet in 1960. In addition the results of the Centres' work should be shared and made available to all groups working in this study. The bibliographies prepared by some of the Centres and by the Division of Studies of the WCC should also be available in the area.

Changing Patterns in Missionary Strategy

ALAN BRASH

From an address to the Annual Summer Conference of the New Zealand SCM, December 1958, and reprinted from Student, magazine of the NZSCM

The expansion of the Christian Church through the missionary movement during the last 150 years has not only been the greatest expansion of all its history, but the greatest expansion of any religion at any time in human history. Yet today this missionary movement is, to some extent, immobilized. The resources of the missions are just able to maintain the *status quo*, which means that real advance is not often expected, and does not often happen. This situation demands a radical overhaul of missionary strategy — more than that, it is actually producing a complete revolution. Before I speak to you of that revolution of changing patterns, I want to make two preliminary remarks :

First, I believe that in the last decades the missionary sending churches have been, in fact, represented by better missionaries than they have deserved. To the extent, therefore, that I will be criticizing the missionaries and the missionary methods, I want to make it quite plain that I am criticizing in double measure the churches themselves. Whatever be the form of my criticism, it is not directed, in fact, against the missionaries, but against those of us who have stayed behind and in large measure controlled their activity by what we are.

Secondly, it is necessary to understand that the revolution in missionary strategy is not a completed revolution. It has already begun, but it is something which will only come to its God-intended fruition if you and I understand it and participate fully in it...

I want to mention four aspects of the revolution which is taking place in missionary strategy :

1. There is the breakdown of the conception that one part of the world can be called "Christendom" and the other part described as "heathen lands afar". This conception has broken down in the minds of Western people, but it has brought complete disillusion to the minds of people in Asia and Africa. Prime Minister Nkrumah told the International Missionary Council Assembly at Ghana : "What do we Africans see when we look abroad ? We see powerful

peoples engaged in a futile and destructive arms race — we see precious capital that might help to raise up the peoples of Africa and Asia, flung away to potential destruction. What has this to do with the Christian charity which the West proclaims?"

Once it was a universal assumption that a Christian nation was a better nation than a Buddhist or Moslem nation. There may or may not be some ultimate truth in the idea, but at least let us take stock of the fact that Buddhism, for example, has launched a great missionary movement to save the West from destroying itself because of the inadequacy of its religion and its life. The first fact to grasp then in today's missionary strategy is that the Church in every land has to send out missionaries, and every land has dire need to receive them. There are already some Asian missionaries evangelizing in the West, and this is but the pattern of things to come. Each has something to give and much to receive.

2. The underlying fact in all I have said so far is, of course, the existence of the Church everywhere... We are becoming accustomed to the thought, for example, that more people go to church to worship God through Jesus Christ in Indonesia, than attend in Australia and New Zealand put together. But have we yet assessed the significance of the relationship between the Church in England and the Church in India? If the population of England, excluding the rest of Britain, is assessed at forty million, and if the Bishops' report of a few years ago was right in saying that only ten per cent of English people ever go to church, we can say that about four million people at most attend church in England — it is probably an over-estimate. I do not know what proportion of Christians in India attend worship, but at least it must be easier to be a nominal Christian in England than in India, and we can say that there are twice as many Christians in India as there are worshipping Christians in England. I am not trying to prove anything, except that we need to reassess the significance of the fact that the Church is everywhere.

I found the Church in the mountains of Formosa — tiny and isolated villages in the mountains — the total population, 150,000 people. Ten years ago, not a single Christian — today, 50,000 — very poor, ignorant, and badly needing help. "Why has the Church in New Zealand not sent somebody to help us?" they asked me. "Because nobody in New Zealand knows how to convert 50,000 people in ten years", I replied. We could help them in many ways, but they and we need to discover that, in the most important thing of all, we need their help. What a revolution it demands in our thinking to absorb these facts...

The Church is everywhere, and the home base is everywhere, and the foreign field is everywhere. These are easy things to say, but extremely difficult to embody in our missionary strategies.

3. The end of paternalism has come. Paternalism is the human relationship in which one party carries responsibility for the final decisions involving both parties. The end of paternalism in missionary strategy is closely related, of course, to the end of colonialism in the political sphere. . . . Together they constitute the greatest and most rapid revolution in human history.

But this is important to missionary strategy, not only because of political factors, but because of what has been involved in human relationships. . . .

The National Christian Council of East Pakistan sent a report to the Ghana Assembly of the International Missionary Council which included a sentence: "It is the claimingness of Christians that forms the chief weakness of the local churches. Any real desire to evangelize non-Christians, in spite of lip service to the idea, is entirely absent from the minds of all but a few." Such "rice Christians" are the fruit of paternalism. In the new pattern of missionary strategy there must be giving and receiving of such a kind that neither by giving nor by receiving are men's souls destroyed.

The era of the "great white father" is ended, though unfortunately not all the great white fathers have discovered it. Recently a mission of a very respectable church in the West offered an equivalent of £75,000 to a poverty-stricken church in an Asian land to build a theological college, provided the Western church still retained the ownership, and provided every teacher in the college signed a profession of faith dictated from the West, every year. Doubtless this money was offered, and these conditions laid down, with the highest motives. But the whole proposition reeks of the conviction that the Asian church leaders are only children and therefore not capable of looking after either their buildings or their faith themselves. At least this is how they thought of it as I heard them talk about it. They are so poor, and they needed that college so badly. It was a modern miracle of grace that the offer was rejected unconditionally. . . .

The Church can no longer be divided into selected races, or on the basis of economic or social status. In the Church the decisions that should come from the guidance of the Holy Spirit cannot be channelled only through one group. Paternalism is going, and its going must be hastened.

4. The Church everywhere is discovering the necessity of crossing not only the geographical frontiers, but also the social and economic frontiers in the mission.

In the past there has been a kind of progression in missionary strategy which I think of in these terms. In Ghana I saw eight graves. They were of missionaries who landed in the Gold Coast over 100 years ago from the Basel Mission. So great were their tribulations that within six weeks all members of the party were dead. Inevitably the mission moved its headquarters up into the healthier hills, and surely no one on earth could possibly blame them. Yes, but from that kind of movement there has gone on and on and on a determination to provide for missionaries as many as possible of the comforts and self-protections and even luxuries available in their home lands. In a way this was eminently reasonable and perfectly right. But as the provision of more luxuries became possible, many missions, though not all, allowed themselves to pass a certain frontier, and that frontier became so momentous that it began to divide the missionaries completely from their people. So appeared the great missionary mansions, the protected compounds, and the lavish cars. I have visited many missionaries whose Christian character humbled me to the dust, but because they are heirs of something passed down to them, were living in great buildings which, to the people to whom they wished to preach, made them look totally insincere. In many such places the incarnation of the love of Christ was lost, not by the missionaries, but by the strategies that controlled their lives...

Today the pattern of the missionary strategy of the churches is again demanding a greater sacrifice for Christ, so that the social and economic frontiers can be crossed. I find these new messengers of the Church living in the mud villages of India and Pakistan, and in simple dwellings behind barbed-wire with the people in the villages of Malaya. I found a Dutch doctor in a jungle hospital in Kalimantan, living in a simple house among the people. He had many things they did not have, but not too many, and he was one of them. It was missionaries like that who, amidst all the tension between the Indonesians and the Dutch, gave the Indonesian churches the courage to say before all their nation: "We want the Dutch missionaries to stay"...

I want to speak now of the implications of all this for us, and if I continue to speak in terms of missionary situations, I beg you to remember that I am speaking particularly to those of us not yet engaged in overseas missionary enterprise. Again, I would make four points:

1. The Gospel must be proclaimed not only as relevant to the whole of life, but as the only way to abundant life. It remains the most urgent and important news in the world...

Let me give you an example from West Pakistan, a country of about thirty-five million people, one million of them Christians. It would appear that the three greatest problems in that land are the following :

a) Vast and rapidly increasing population. Poor as the people now are, greater and greater poverty threatens unless this problem is not only tackled, but solved.

b) Land sterility. The whole life of the country depends on the harvest, but constant floods are bringing sterility from underground salts to more and more of the cultivated land, so that two per cent of it is being lost every year. Unless this problem is realistically tackled at the level of the village farmer, even a static population would mean increasing hunger in an area once known as the granary of India.

c) Reliable leadership. The basic reason why democracy as we know it has broken down in Pakistan and has been replaced first by military and then a civil dictatorship, is that too few people are trained, and of those trained, too few have any standards of integrity.

These, it would appear, are the problems which must be solved if the people of West Pakistan are to find an abundant life, not only in material terms, but in terms of all the peaceful and cultural and spiritual values by which man's life can be assessed.

Against this background I set out to find what the Christian missionary enterprise is doing. The Christians are mostly illiterate villagers brought into the Church by mass movement. The mission enterprise seems mostly concerned to maintain secondary schools and universities which fewer and fewer Christians are academically or financially able to attend. The great Christian hospital in Lahore, to survive, must cater almost exclusively to the most wealthy group of people in that city. The hospital superintendent was quite frank about it. What have these institutions to do with the real needs of the people and the spread of the Gospel ?

We, in the so-called "sending" countries, assume too readily that missionaries are mostly ordained ministers. One church in the West recently sent out thirty-eight new missionaries to Asia, thirty-six of them ordained ministers trained to preach in a Western-type church. Asia does not need such preachers nearly as much as it needs men and women who can embody the Gospel and incarnate the love of Christ, not in terms of Western-type institutions catering to the wealthy minority, but out in the dust and hovels. It is not enough even to stand in the dust and preach. The greatest need is for missionaries who will understand the real needs of the people and who will go out in the compassion of Christ to meet those needs.

We have been too eager to tally up the numbers of those who, in response to our preaching, have come through a form of conversion. Too much of our missionary propaganda is simply the reiteration of that tally without any real communication at all about the true needs of the people concerned. Christ has promised men abundant life, and we must think again what that really demands of us in our care for our non-Christian neighbours. I certainly do not mean that we should substitute what is normally called "service" for what has been regarded as "evangelistic preaching". This is a false distinction. What I am suggesting is that we need to embody our preaching in persons who, while they preach, are always involved in service of the people at the points of their greatest need as they seek a more abundant life.

2. Related to this demand that the Gospel be made relevant to the whole of life is the fact that we must be realistic and honest in assessing the result already achieved. We have often idealized the younger churches. I myself have been guilty of it, because I have sometimes generalized on the basis of that extraordinary quality found sometimes among them. But recently I came back from Asia and wrote an article on the prevalence of "rice" Christians. No church paper in this country has printed that article except the one which I edit myself. And the reason? Very few people denied the truth of what I was saying. What they said was: "You must not say these things—it will stop the flow of funds for missions." Actually I believe that that is nonsense, but whether it is nonsense or not it is certainly immoral and un-Christian...

3. There is an urgent demand for greater unity among Christians. Very, very few of the theological differences held important by the denominational missionary boards have any real importance in the work of the missionary enterprise, yet these divisions are undercutting everywhere the advance of the Gospel. The United Churches of South India, North India, and Ceylon, and the East Asia Christian Conference constitute the plea of the Asian churches to their forbears in the West to cease from their denominational bickerings...

In many Asian lands one of the major factors keeping the little churches apart is that the money they need comes in separate channels from different mission boards. One of the things that hinders the enterprises they undertake in common is that when they sit down together, being human, they keep secret the kind and quantity of support they can each get from overseas.

In one Asian country a Western group came out to build a Christian radio station. They found a good one already in existence and as a group they approved it. But the folk back home wanted

one with their label on it, so now there is a competing station in opposition to the first, all in the name of Christ ! In a few places the funds from overseas come channelled unitedly and by common consent, and thus is set the possibility of an entirely new era in Christian relationships.

In the world of nations, while bilateral relationships between two nations still continue, it is regarded as a scandal and offence to the total community of nations if major decisions are made and operations carried out on a bilateral basis when the operations intimately affect the wider community of nations. We regard it as a scandal when Britain and France invade the Middle East, or Russia invades Hungary, without reference to the United Nations. This is the day of multilateral co-operation, but the churches in their world enterprise are still in the days of bilateral operations. Even when the matter under discussion is a major strategy change in the Christian enterprise, neighbouring churches and boards are not even consulted. The difficulties involved in rectifying this kind of situation are admittedly tremendous, but they must be overcome.

4. Finally, we are rediscovering today that the only ultimate foundation for mission is the love of Christ and obedience to his command. This is the call to Christians everywhere.

In Calcutta I met Sister Theresa. She is a short, middle-aged woman with the sleeves of her nun's robe tied up securely above her elbows. In the centre of Calcutta's slums she maintains a small hall which she calls appropriately "home for the destitute dying". Into it are brought every day some of the people who would otherwise die on the pavements. I saw them there — 100 or more — lying on straw, the men on one side of the hall and the women on the other. Here was every kind of human corruption and filth, suffering and evil. Sister Theresa and her few helpers laid them on the straw and did what simple things they could, with their bare hands, and the compassion of Christ. There could be no successful results — there could be no conversions — there could hardly be any thanks. There could just be a daily harvest of suffering and death. Yet in this woman, Sister Theresa, I found a sense of the peace and the victory and the closeness of God which I have seen only in a very few places in the earth.

This is not simply a challenge to the strategies of certain activities called missions — it is a challenge to all who name the name of Christ, and a reminder to each of us here that the first new pattern that is needed is one in my heart and in my living.

ASIAN TRAVEL DIARY

CHARLES LONG

The life of a Federation Secretary is full of the unexpected. My first task on a recent trip around the world was to open the Rome Opera Season. This was purely by accident. The immediate destination was the Rangoon conference, but one had to fly first to Rome to connect with a direct flight. Since this meant four or five hours leisure, I went to visit the beautiful new YMCA hostel in the centre of the city. Nearby there were notices of a performance that evening at the Opera House of a new work by Pizzetti, an Italian version of T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. As an Anglican I thought it my duty to see whether Eliot was murdered in Rome. The first problem was to find the Opera House. This I tried to determine by asking an innocent bystander in sign language. It was perhaps not surprising that he answered in perfectly clear Brooklynese that I was standing in front of the place! Fortunately there was a ticket available rather close to heaven, and I had a wonderful view of the splendour, fashion, and fanfare of opening night. I doubt if anyone else present, however, made so fashionable an exit. I had to leave before the end of the second act to catch a plane for the Far East.

Rome to Rangoon required only three easy steps. In one long arc we passed over Bulgaria, Bosphorus, Northern Turkey — miles of rugged snow-covered hills and mountains, and finally arrived at mid-morning at the foot of the Caspian Sea and the capital city of ancient Persia. Here was a semi-circle of steep, forbidding mountains, the brown bumps of the city at their base and an apron of winter-hardened desert stretching into the distance. Never have I been in a place which seemed so isolated and cut off from the problems and progress of other nations. Yet here is one of the oldest continuous centres of world trade. Across the runway the Iranian air force had bunched together twenty or more of the latest jet fighters, a pair of which took off every twenty minutes or so to patrol the troubled borders of their state.

Next stop was Karachi, Pakistan. There was not time to go into the city but I did see my first motorcycle rickshaw. The "coolie" straddles a big 600 cc. cycle and roars off, with the dust flying up into the rickshaw behind him. Thus the little runners of the past have their revenge, getting back their own dignity while the passengers lose theirs.

On the last leg of the flight to Rangoon I discovered that the two most attractive fellow passengers were both on their way to

the same conference — Vilma Nathaniel of Pakistan and Beatriz Couch of Argentina. We arrived, as did a good many other delegates to this meeting, at 3.30 a.m., but even at this hour the Burma SCM had arranged a welcoming committee. It soon developed that he was as much stranded at the airport as we were, and it took another hour or two to find transportation for the long ride to St. John's High School. Our first impressions of Rangoon before dawn are unforgettable: the flicker of lanterns and small fires by the roadside; dark, hooded shapes huddled around them; packs of wild dogs barking all around us like pursuing wolves; Buddhist monks in twos and threes already on the road to begin their daily begging.

Lessons from the Rangoon conference

The Rangoon conference itself has been thoroughly reported elsewhere. There, on a back porch converted into a bedroom, as the rising sun flushed the gold tip of the Shwedagon Pagoda, four Federation Secretaries met each other as a group for the first time. Bob Bates had been there for a month already, struggling with local arrangements for the conference. Kentaro Shiozuki and Frank Engel had arrived to help with final details a few days before. All four of us found ourselves occupied with these final details until the conference was nearly over! Burma is not the easiest place for outsiders to "get things done", even when the organizing team is a blend of Australian, Japanese, and American efficiencies. What we would have done without the untiring labour of our Burmese friends, Kyaw Than, Khin Maung Din, and several of the staff of St. John's High School who volunteered their services, nobody knows. As is often the case, things seemed in much greater confusion to those who were responsible for managing the conference than to those who were participants in it. In the mysterious way of the East, the conference did get organized, moved smoothly, and nobody seemed unhappy.

Apart from the immediate value of this meeting for students in Asia, we learned much to guide us all in future development of study of the Life and Mission of the Church. How easy it is to limit our concept of the whole Church and its task to our own narrow experience of the Church in our own country. There is no substitute for meeting one another internationally and interconfessionally. Without the share in a wider experience it is difficult to see how students can begin to understand what this study project is all about. Certainly it seemed to many leaders that the delegates to the Rangoon conference were by and large quite unprepared to discuss the life and mission of the Church on the scope which WSCF

and the conference planners had in mind. There is need also to prepare students who attend future meetings to understand something of the terminology which is customary in discussing these issues ecumenically today. The ecumenical movement has developed a certain language of its own, and this is not the language of ordinary Christian students. Is the problem in communication between senior leaders in the WSCF and the ordinary student due to the fact that the ecumenical movement has lost touch with the new generation of students, or is it that student Movements, in growing closer to local churches and mission groups, have lost the larger ecumenical vision?

To the extent that the Rangoon conference was meant to give an opportunity for the sharing of experience with regard to the Life and Mission of the Church, an almost fatal weakness of the conference was the absence of any delegation from China. Many of us had to consider the results of the Rangoon conference with a major question-mark in our minds. How would our understanding of the life and mission of the Church in Asia have been altered if Christians from China had been able to share with us their unique experience and convictions?

Post-conference leaders' meetings

Following the conference itself we had a series of meetings which dwindled in size until, like the end of a children's game, only four Federation Secretaries were left sitting in a line. The first was a leaders' meeting including both leaders of the conference and other senior members of delegations, given over to evaluation of the conference itself, and a most fruitful discussion of the points at which a consensus of theological agreement seemed to be developing. Davis McCaughey was Chairman of this meeting. One wonders how many times before he had been in charge of the post-mortem of an SCM conference. The next day was intended to be set aside for a meeting of SCM Secretaries to discuss future policy of the WSCF in Asia. Unfortunately most of the experienced General Secretaries from Asian SCMs failed to come to Rangoon — giving up their places so that others could have the experience — and our Secretaries' meeting was largely given over to orientation of rather new SCM Secretaries to the life and work of the WSCF, including a thorough review of future plans for LMC studies. It was a useful meeting to introduce some key problems to responsible leaders on whom the WSCF must depend for the next few years. Then they too went away and a faithful remnant settled down to folding up bedding, counting mosquito nets, paying bills, and wondering how to escape being involved in writing the conference report.

Churches and students in India and Ceylon

Bob and Sue Bates won the waiting game. The rest of us finally left them behind to settle the conference accounts while Frank and Kentaro made brief stops in Malaya and Bangkok and I went to India and Ceylon. We were to join up together again in Singapore for a WSCF invasion of Indonesia. This was my own first experience of India. It cannot be said that it was a real plunge into the life of that vast country; it was more like a quick shower, stopping only a night or two each in Calcutta, Madras, and Bangalore. The main object was to secure advice and co-operation from certain leaders in this area for our Life and Mission study. There was opportunity also to talk to students and faculties at such famous institutions as the Scottish Church College, founded 120 years ago in Calcutta by Alexander Duff, the Union Theological Seminary in Bangalore, the headquarters of the Indian SCM, and the Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in the same city, and last but not least, the Women's Christian College, Madras. Ah, the dusky maidens moving silently in graceful saris under the tamarind trees at evening! It was so cool and quiet one could hardly believe that 350 co-eds were about. There was also opportunity to spend a day at the Council of the Diocese of Madras of the Church of South India. The main subject under discussion seemed to be how this ten-year-old united church could move from an understandable preoccupation with its own life of growing together to a more effective evangelism directed to the non-Christian community. Taking part in this discussion of the relation of the life to the mission of the Church in Madras were a number of present and former leaders of the Indian SCM. In India, as perhaps nowhere else in the world, the LMC study involves both the student world and the leaders of the churches in common discussion and recognition of a mutual responsibility.

From Madras it was a short plane trip, in a plane that could not have made a long one, across the sea to Jaffna in Northern Ceylon. Here I was the guest of the Chairman of the WSCF, the Rev. D. T. Niles. He was eager for news of everything that had happened in Rangoon and of all plans for the world teaching conference in Strasbourg. We spent a full day discussing things in heaven and things on earth. I asked him how he kept himself occupied when he could not travel about the world, and he told me that he was busy editing his wife's third book! That same evening there was a meeting of local church leaders including Bishop Kulandran and visiting Professor Ralph Hyslop of Union Theological Seminary, New York, who is directing an international scholarship program

for younger church leaders. Each of us had a chance to present our concerns to the missionaries and Tamil church leaders who were there. A lively debate followed on the life and mission of the Church, the churches and the SCM, etc. The next day I flew to Colombo on the southern tip of Ceylon, where I was met by Maxwell de Alwis, General Secretary of the Ceylon SCM, and two New Zealand delegates to the Rangoon conference who were going home, slowly and reluctantly. Max had arranged for us to meet with students and Senior Friends of the Ceylon SCM. Although small in numbers, the Ceylon SCM is a tightly knit fellowship, very alert to its responsibilities in the midst of social change and in the face of growing Buddhist aggressiveness. In recent years it has developed a high degree of self-support through the solicitation of monthly subscriptions from Senior Friends and through close co-operation with both university professors and the leaders of the churches.

Stepping into the airplane for the long flight across the Indian Ocean to Singapore was like stepping back into the European world. The passengers were nearly all white, curry was not on the menu, and everything was soft and air-conditioned. As has often been remarked, the network of international airlines has become almost a pattern of life in its own right. One flies over the most diverse cultures and romantic places, but the airports are all alike, the crews generally speak some variety of English, and the passengers make up a kind of artificial classless society in spite of their differences of race and costume. The one thing all have in common is their utter dependence on the vast and intricate organization of men and machines to get them some place in a hurry.

Problems of a pioneering Movement

Fortunately the organization sometimes breaks down and one is forced to become acquainted with cities that lie beyond the airports. Something went wrong with our reservations to Djakarta and we had three extra days in Singapore. This gave us the chance to catch up on sleep, correspondence, Chinese food, and haircuts, and to deepen old friendships with leaders of the Malayan SCM and the faculty of Trinity College, which trains men for the ministry in the multi-racial, multi-lingual population of the Malayan peninsula. The SCM in this area is still in a pioneer stage of its development. It is interesting to note that among the people still working hard to build this new Movement of Christian students are young Christians who attended the WSCF Leadership Training Course in Kandy *eleven years ago*. Church leaders with whom we talked seemed willing to help with both financial contributions and advice,

but they are equally determined not to help too much — that is, to an extent which would threaten student initiative and responsibility.

One evening we attended a meeting of leaders at the Student Centre in Singapore and were surprised to discover that all the participating students were drawn from the former colonial university which is, of course, English speaking. They had made no efforts to include in their SCM students from the new Chinese university nearby. They did not realize that enrolment at Nanyang University was even larger than their own. A similar problem exists in Hong Kong where student Christian work is divided between the English-speaking colonial university and a group of Chinese-speaking university colleges. Because of an artificial language barrier, university students living in the same city find it almost impossible to meet and work together in the same student organizations. In both Singapore and Hong Kong there seems to be an urgent need of full-time, bilingual staff, locally recruited. In both cities the need is the more urgent because of the good work which has already been done by foreigners giving full time to student work and laying the foundation for a truly representative SCM.

The Indonesian SCM — a reconciling factor

The idea of sending three WSCF Secretaries to Indonesia at the same time was frankly an experiment. A fourth visitor, Harry Daniel, of the Indian SCM, was also expected to spend some time in Indonesia shortly after we ourselves had left. Earlier travel plans made it seem likely that the three Federation Secretaries would be staying in Indonesia one after the other, *en route* to some other place, Frank Engel on his way home to Australia, Kentaro Shiozuki on his way to Japan, and Charles Long on his way to the USA from Rangoon. The obvious inconvenience and imposition upon the hospitality of the GMKI (the SCM of Indonesia) made us think of ways of combining forces to make a simultaneous visit. It was intended that we should be together in Djakarta for a few days' consultation with staff and student leaders, but that the rest of our two and a half weeks should be spent with each man visiting different parts of the "outer" islands of this country. It was also intended that Ken Shiozuki would concentrate on meeting with local branches of the GMKI itself, while I was to consult with Indonesian church leaders and missionaries in the interest of the Life and Mission of the Church project.

Actually the experiment never had a fair trial. Because of rebel activity in many districts and a shortage of inter-island transportation, we were compelled to spend our whole time on Java. That

being the case, it also proved most convenient for us to travel as a group and to have a single program in most places. While we were sorry not to roam more widely, to Borneo, Sumatra, the Celebes, and Bali, we were equally sorry there was not more time to stay in Java itself. Indonesia is surely one of the most fascinating countries in the world today. Every possibility for the future is still open, nothing is yet fixed. All the paradoxes and contradictions of a revolutionary era are present. The communists were for the moment loyal to the central government but several Christian communities were up in arms against it. The tragic division of the Christians of Indonesia on political questions is reminiscent of what has happened in China and Germany, but it was also thrilling to see the degree to which the GMKI was proving to be one of the true reconciling factors in national life. We were told that it is the only student organization in which Javanese, Bataks from Sumatra, Chinese, and students from the Celebes all take an equal part and might all be included in the list of officers. Church leaders in Djakarta (including the Vice-Premier of the present Government) also spoke of their sense of a double responsibility to help bring reconciliation between contending political forces on the one hand, and on the other hand to deepen the sense of the unity of the Church, with special concern for the isolated Christians of the rebel territories. Civil unrest creates many problems for individual students and pastors in Java who have been cut off from their families and from all forms of financial support for months or even years.

We were able to visit not only Djakarta but local branches of the GMKI in Bogor, Surabaya, Malang, Jogdjakarta (Frank made this visit alone), and Bandung. Some of the local branches have up to 1,600 members. They are entirely directed by students, in most cases without the help of any senior adviser or staff person. Few students can be persuaded to take such responsibility for more than a year at a time, and of course it means almost complete interruption of their own studies. In two cities the GMKI is fortunate to have the advice of missionaries with long SCM experience in Europe, and in Jogdjakarta there is a fraternal student worker from the Australian SCM. The problem of leadership is an acute one. It cannot be solved simply by asking the churches or the YMCA to supply student chaplains. Few Indonesian pastors have a university education, and those who have are either in administrative or teaching posts or in charge of congregations with several thousand active members. And yet I do not know of any SCM in the world with more vitality or more immediate importance for the development of leadership in both Church and nation.

We were, of course, anxious to learn something of Indonesia's own cultural traditions, but Indonesian students seemed more interested in the culture of the West. An illustration of this is what happened on our first night in Djakarta when the Vice-Minister of Customs, the father of one of the GMKI students, invited us for dinner at his home. It was a genuine Indonesian feast and blew all the fuses on my tongue in spite of vast quantities of tea and papaya juice. Our host introduced his eight children and proudly named the professions each was planning to enter. He apologized for one daughter, the beauty of the family, whom he said was only interested in dancing. Throughout the meal students were playing rock-and-roll records. Later in the evening they turned these off long enough to give the beautiful daughter a chance to demonstrate for us a Balinese dance in full costume. For the visitors this was a magnificent experience, but the other students were obviously bored. When she had finished they did not even applaud but eagerly went back to playing Elvis the Pelvis.

The need for social change in Indonesia

My most vivid memory is of train journeys down the length of Java. These usually began before dawn, and the trip to Surabaya took fifteen hours. We went up mountains and through bits of jungle and over unbroken miles of rice paddy, bouncing along on four square wheels till I thought my teeth would rattle for ever. It was a magnificent panorama of tropical Asia. We commented to each other that if this was an area of rapid social change, it was not easy to see signs of it. Conversations with others on the train taught us why more and more people feel the *need* for social change. For example, Java, which has long been an exporter of rice and now produces more than before the war, still finds it necessary to import large quantities of grain from countries as distant as the USA and Russia. The people are still undernourished, most of them eating nothing but rice. A doctor told us that the average worker cannot even afford vegetables, and is fortunate to have perhaps twenty grams of dried fish per month. In spite of this the population statistics continue to explode. I myself did not meet a Batak Christian family with less than ten living children. The strange shortage of rice is matched by an even stranger shortage of petrol and kerosene in spite of the major and accessible oil installations in Sumatra. In a time of rapid inflation the government has refused to allow foreign oil firms to increase their retail prices. These firms have apparently then refused to move in new supplies in sufficient quantity. Wage scales generally must be

among the world's lowest — two dollars a month for the average plantation worker or tenant farmer. Perhaps this can be supported by the people just because they live a "simple tropical life" which requires only the minimum of clothes, housing, diversion, and general expenditure of energy. On our train journeys we noticed that most workers were out of the fields by noon and only a few went back or stayed on in the afternoon. One has the general impression that the people of Java are not ravaged by disease or consciously suffering from hunger and that they are cheerful, clean, and self-confident. Closer looks often change such first impressions. Leaders of the people are less aware of the unchanged life of the farmers than of the fact that the future of the whole nation is being decided by the politically conscious minority and by the new and often under-trained classes of civil servants, professional people, military men, and merchants who have boldly taken into their own hands the whole colonial apparatus. Literacy has gone from seven per cent to forty per cent since the war. The new men of ambition demand power and the poorest of the poor dream dreams of an irresistible attractiveness.

Overwhelming hospitality

In Surabaya I stayed with a Batak family. The father was one of the early converts among the Batak tribes of North Sumatra. He owes everything to what he learned from the missionaries, and has now become not only a devoted Christian and a leading layman in a congregation of more than 6,000 members in this city, but also managing director of an important Indonesian bank and patriarch of a thriving household. One of his daughters, a law student, is a leader of the local GMKI. He and his wife are proud of their cultural background. In their living room they keep a model of the Batak hut in which they started life. Their hospitality is overwhelming, as hospitality seemed to be everywhere in Java. In this household the custom is for the guest to eat first, with one member of the family to serve and another standing by to wave off flies. Once the guest has finished, the rest of the family begins — about a dozen people, by guess, though I was never able to count them in one place.

Those quiet farmers I mentioned seeing from the train tore up the track just behind us, cut the wires, and isolated West Java for three days. The train that followed ours by a couple of hours was wrecked and twenty passengers killed, half of them being shot by the "bandits". This sort of thing happens two or three times a month. There is no guarantee of safety outside the big cities and very few means of communication between them. The government

itself admits that in one year rebel terrorists killed an average of three persons a day and burned down 70,000 homes. The identity of the rebels varies from place to place — dissident army groups, fanatic Moslems, plain bandits, and in the outer islands also "states-rights" groups like the Christian Bataks fight against Javanese centralism. Some of the rebellions are said to be supported and armed from abroad by those who hope to break up the essentially unstable alliance between the palace (Soekarno), the communists, and the central army.

An exciting — and worthwhile — trip

Due to "conditions" we had an exciting trip from Surabaya to Bandung (this a day after a side trip to the mountain town of Malang to visit a GMKI branch, a theological school, and a magnificent swimming pool, the Selecta, where only Frank and I braved the cold water). We started at 4.30 a.m., as do most travellers in these parts, uncertain where our journey would end or how long it would take. The break in the tracks had not yet been repaired, the engineers of the railway were on the verge of striking, and rumours were everywhere. All went well as far as Jogjakarta where Frank heaved a sigh of relief and got off to visit the GMKI there and its Australian student worker, Alan Watson. Ken and I kept going with the Chairman of the Djakarta branch, who had been our guide all week, a tough young Batak with sideburns and a passion for Presley and Brando. In the GMKI he is known, he says, as "the cross boy", which I think is his re-translation for "angry young man". It took me days to discover the acute intellect and dedicated spirit he hides beneath this disguise. Anyway, on we bumped through the same verdant hills and peaceful paddy, until we came to the town of Tjirebon, some distance away from the intersection with the branch railway running up to Bandung where, in normal times, one changes trains. As our train stopped, who should jump on board but Wim Montalalu, a GMKI delegate at Rangoon, and Chairman of the Bandung branch. He quickly introduced Tagor, his Vice-Chairman, and urged us to get off the train at once and go with him to Bandung by car — it was then five o'clock and the connecting train probably would not run after sunset — even if ours could get to it. So we scrambled out and into a Dodge pickup truck which Wim hired at an exorbitant price (two dollars) for the five-hour run up the mountain road to our destination — and I mean run. That driver had nerves of steel. We were checked several times by village security guards and several people tried to stop us in dark spots, but Jehu just whipped the horses and nobody

wanted to waste bullets. About a third of the "villagers" we saw carried weapons — who was for what nobody knew. Most of the way was pitch dark and silent, up mountain gorges and through jungle. The hours lasted for ever. We were stopped in a village that had *just* been attacked by terrorists with at least one person being killed. We wondered where they were now. I became acutely aware of how Dutch I looked. But finally we broke over the last ridge and there we were, in a lovely modern city spread out on the crater of a vast but extinct volcano with bright lights and hordes of people out for a Saturday evening stroll. *Now* they told us we had just run over the most dangerous road in Java that no sane men would ever travel at night. I'll admit that I was scared, though ignorant. But those two GMKI boys *knew* they were risking their lives to go to meet us and see us through. It was worth the trip. A wonderful group of young men heading a branch of 700 members, mostly engineering students but also a few in other faculties. I preached at a student service Sunday morning and Ken and I both concentrated over the next two days on improving relationships between GMKI and the churches. That's another long story, but I think we made real progress, culminating in a meeting of ministers and lay leaders with the GMKI leaders, the first meeting of its kind they had ever been able to hold, with an agreement in principle that the GMKI wanted a full-time student pastor, even if he is a foreigner, and the churches would take responsibility for securing, supporting, and advising one.

My host in Bandung was a distinguished Javanese eye specialist. His jolly wife spoke English with an American accent she learned from the Voice of America radio! They have eight children between the ages of fourteen and twenty-two including six beautiful daughters who besieged me with questions and surrounded us all with merri-ment in several languages. The family has had three foreign guests, an Australian in 1950, Muriel Lester four years ago, and me. Great events! Every movement watched and words recorded. I signed everybody's book and spoke wisely of the world and had lots of fun, though little rest.

University and theological student work in the Philippines

Ken and I travelled together to the Philippines and Japan. For me the stop in the Philippines was limited to two crowded days in Manila, on one of which I had to speak five times to different groups. In the Philippines it seems that nearly every student goes on to post-secondary education. There are said to be 150,000 university students in Manila alone. The young Philippine SCM is

growing in strength with its first full-time staff member and the help of a number of well-equipped, missionary-sponsored student centres. The great bulk of the population is claimed by the Roman Catholic Church and co-operation between non-Roman Catholics has often proved to be difficult. Certain Protestant denominations have been able to work closely together through a Federation of Churches, but new patterns are needed to include within a larger framework the many new churches and sects founded since the war, the Episcopalians, and the Philippine Independent Church, which with two million members is the largest non-Roman group in the country. The chief difficulty seems to be to distinguish between ordinary youth work centred in the congregation, in which many university students of the metropolitan areas participate, and programs like the SCM designed to meet the needs of university students themselves. Ken and I were able to talk with thirty university professors and student workers from the Manila area, meeting together for the first time to discuss common problems in regard to Christian witness in the university. Another historic meeting took place the next afternoon when a delegation of theological students from different churches held the first interseminary meeting which has taken place since the war. These included Anglican, Independent, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Disciples students, who received our report of the Life and Mission of the Church study with great enthusiasm as a possible focus for their own future meeting together. They could hardly be held back from organizing a committee and drafting a constitution on the spot for an Interseminary Movement. Someone suggested that it might be wise to consult their seminary and church authorities first!

The Hong Kong SCM

Ken remained longer in the Philippines and was able to make a trip to visit branches of the SCM outside Manila, while I flew over to Hong Kong for three days of reunion with old friends in that city. Here too there was a large meeting of representatives from several Chinese colleges and the University of Hong Kong together with missionary and YMCA student workers, to hear a report of the Rangoon conference and a discussion of the LMC project. Through the student centre, provided by the generosity of the YMCA and the Presbyterian mission, the Hong Kong SCM is developing a strong program in half a dozen Chinese colleges, including Bible classes and a system of part-time jobs for refugee students which at the same time gives them opportunity to engage in service to the community by conducting primary schools, recreation clubs, etc. Serious

study projects are difficult to develop, partly because of language difficulties and partly because students must divide their time between campus life and part-time employment. But a beginning in this direction is being made through well-planned conferences and retreats at vacation time.

I made the mistake of arriving in Hong Kong to spend the three days of the Chinese New Year holiday. The fire crackers did not stop popping in those concrete canyons for seventy-two hours. This was rather overdoing a Chinese welcome to a WSCF Secretary! The roar of the airplane engines taking me to Japan seemed peaceful by contrast.

LMC and co-operation among Japanese student groups

About Japan I shall say nothing for fear of not saying enough. Ken and I were together for eight days, travelling or speaking most of the time, in Tokyo, Kyoto, Kobe, and Fukuoka. I was very much impressed both by Japan itself and its wonderful recovery from the effects of war and by the quality of leaders on both the student and staff level involved in student Christian work. The work done by the university branch of the YMCA, known as the Japanese SCM, is only part of the story. There are also a number of very active student centres run by able young missionaries, programs of Bible study led by prominent professors related to the non-Church movement, and the work done in congregations in the large cities, congregations whose membership is often made up almost entirely of students. The study of the Life and Mission of the Church has attracted a great deal of interest throughout Japan as a point of co-operation between these different groups involved in Christian work in the university. It is hoped that by a deeper study of the life and mission of the Church, better patterns of co-operation and more effective forms of evangelism will develop.

So brief a stay in Japan was for me terribly frustrating, but I had to fly on to the USA to meet with church and mission board leaders who are supporting so generously the present work of the WSCF, and to catch up with the rapid social change in my own home land. The schedule of interviews and speeches arranged for me by Herluf Jensen, most of them within a mile radius of Grand Central Station, was enough to eliminate all traces of homesickness! On board the jet plane which took me back to Europe at last, I found myself carrying on imaginary conversations with one church official I failed to see. When a Federation Secretary begins talking to himself, it is time for him to return to Geneva and the tender care of a wife!

BOOK REVIEWS

Christians and Race Relations Today

A Review Article by DAISUKE KITAGAWA

- I. *Church and Race in South Africa*, ed. by David M. Paton. SCM Press, London, 1958. 8s. 6d.
- II. The UNESCO Series on *The Race Question in Modern Science*. 100 Fr. fr. each. Nos. 1-9 available also in one volume published by UNESCO, 1956. 850 Fr. fr.
 1. *Racial Myths* by Juan Comas
 2. *Race and Psychology* by Otto Klineberg
 3. *Race and Culture* by Michel Leiris
 4. *Race and History* by Claude Lévi-Strauss
 5. *The Roots of Prejudice* by Arnold M. Rose
 6. *Race and Society* by Kenneth Little
 7. *Race and Biology* by L. C. Dunn
 8. *The Significance of Racial Differences* by G. M. Morant
 9. *Race Mixture* by Harry L. Shapiro
 10. *The Race Concept : Results of an Inquiry*. 250 Fr. fr.
- III. The UNESCO Series on *The Race Question and Modern Thought*
 1. *The Catholic Church and the Race Question* by Father Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P., 1953. 100 Fr. fr.
 2. *The Ecumenical Movement and the Race Problem* by W. A. Visser 't Hooft, 1954. 100 Fr. fr.
 3. *Jewish Thought as a Factor in Civilization* by Leon Roth, 1954. 100 Fr. fr.
 4. *Buddhism and the Race Question* by P. Malalasekera and K. N. Jayatilleke, 1958. 150 Fr. fr.

The racial or colour problem is universal in our world today, as Bishop Reeves of Johannesburg stated in his charge to his diocesan synod in 1955. "At a time when the coloured people of the world outnumber the white people by almost three to one, and in which the members of the different racial and cultural groups are being

brought into ever closer contact and communication with one another, racial issues are becoming almost a universal problem. Such a situation makes it inevitable that the white and coloured people of the world will have to make radical readjustments in their attitudes to one another if they are ever to learn to live together in peace. It is the difficulties that arise in trying to do this very thing which give rise to the so-called 'colour problem'" (*Church and Race in South Africa*, p. 24).

In the Union of South Africa, as in the southern states of the United States, the problem is found in its most acute form. For this reason it is highly recommended that *Church and Race in South Africa* be studied thoroughly by all before they read the booklets of the UNESCO series. In this small book, Paton has collected "papers from South Africa, 1952-57, illustrating the churches' search for the will of God" on matters of race relations. "Selections from the Charges to his Diocesan Synod, 1952-57" of the Bishop of Johannesburg, comprising approximately forty pages, give the reader a very good idea of what the problems are. The crux of the matter lies in the determined attempts by the dominant group to preserve its position at all costs (pp. 27, 106 *et al.*). "The Liquidation of Adams College", by its principal, the Rev. G. C. Grant, presents a case history of this effort by the dominant group that somehow feels the "threat" of the rise of the heretofore subjected people. This tragic story helps us to appreciate the meaning of what Bishop Reeves says earlier: "But grievous as have been the results of the policies of these last years upon the non-Europeans, I am even more perturbed by the effects of such policies upon many white people. There has been, I believe, a noticeable loss in integrity among many Europeans in recent times... History has many examples to show of the evil effects upon a ruling class which has been determined at all cost to retain all the power in its own hands" (pp. 29-30).

Responsible leaders in the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa are by no means indifferent to the problem of race relations. Extracts from a "Report of the ad hoc Commission for Race Relations appointed by the Federal Council of the Dutch Reformed Churches in South Africa", accompanied by a minority view expressed by Prof. B. B. Keet, shows that some serious rethinking is going on among them. "To an increasing degree the Christian Church is becoming aware of the danger of acquiescing in race relations which may perhaps not be in accordance with the Word of God. Therefore the Dutch Reformed Church is also listening afresh to what the Word of God has to say to us on the above-mentioned matter with respect to the present situation" (p. 97).

The book also contains some statements of the Roman Catholic Church (June 1952), of a conference of African Leaders (October 1956), several Christian groups' reactions to the Native Laws Amendment Act (1957), and the Special Resolution of the 74th Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa (October 1956) on "Statement on Public and Political Questions". In all these statements one can see how deeply involved is *the Church*, regardless of confessions, in the problem of race in South Africa. However, as Paton says, this is true of the Church everywhere in the world. "We are not called upon to repent the sins of others but our own" (p. 117).

II

We turn now to the UNESCO Series: *The Race Question in Modern Science* (Vols 1-9). Here scholars of high competence in their respective fields have been invited by UNESCO to refute all kinds of racist doctrines. Each document simultaneously accomplishes two things: one, shows the extent to which the racist, under the guise of science, goes to rationalize, if not justify, his position, and the other, shows how wrong he is from the scientific, not to mention the moral and ethical, point of view.

Before we go further it may be well to remind ourselves of the vantage point at which we stand in investigating the racial problem today. "The victorious allies rejected the proposal of the Japanese delegation to the Paris Conference of 1919 for the inclusion in the Charter of the League of Nations of a declaration proclaiming the equality of all races... The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) lays down that: 'Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, wealth or other status.' " (*Racial Myths*, p. 51. For Vols. 1-9, page references are to the one-volume edition.)

The most extreme type of racial myth is that of "Aryan" or "Nordic" superiority, which was first presented systematically by Arthur de Gobineau in 1853 in *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*. It was not a *nationalist* but a class concept of aristocracy, but once in existence, it could be used in almost any way the racist desired, even to the extent of saying that "the difference in anatomical and histological structure (hair, bones, teeth and tegument) between man and animals is *less* than that between Nordics and other human races", as Gauch says in *Neue Grundlage der Rassenforschung* (1933, p. 43 f.). Indeed as Dr. Ruth Benedict says: "No distortion of

anthropomorphic facts is too absurd to be used by propaganda backed by force and the concentration camp" (quoted in *Racial Myths*, p. 50). To counter racial myths effectively, Prof. Comas suggests the following questions :

What degree of difference is possible between individuals of similar heredity living in unlike settings ?

What are the differences between individuals differing in heredity and living in the same setting ?

(2)

In this scientific day and age the racist too resorts to "scientific" methods to establish his thesis that some races are inferior in their natural endowments and therefore do not have the same "rights" as others. One of the methods most frequently used is the psychological test. Prof. Otto Klineberg, in *Race and Psychology*, illustrates how inadequate such tests are, with many interesting examples vividly described. He concludes, "The net result of all the research that has been conducted in this field is to the effect that innate racial differences in intelligence have not been demonstrated ; that the obtained differences in test results are best explained in terms of social and educational environment ; that as the environmental opportunities of different racial or ethnic groups become more alike, the observed differences in test results also tend to disappear" (p. 71). This does not mean that cultural differences do not exist, but only that they must not be ascribed to race.

(3)

And yet one cannot overlook "the strong conviction of most white people — even those who do not on that account consider themselves racists — of their congenital superiority", says Michel Leiris of the *Musée de l'Homme*, Paris, in *Race and Culture* (p. 85). This Western sense of cultural superiority is at the root of many problems in "areas of rapid social change". As Dr. Alfred Metraux puts it : "At the very time when industrial civilization is penetrating to all points of the globe and is uprooting men of every colour from their age-old traditions, a doctrine, speciously scientific in appearance, is invoked in order to rob these men of their full share in the advantages of the civilization forced upon them."

The belief commonly held within Western civilization, that "the highest type of humanity is, if not the whole, at least the best, of the white race", stems from the "failure to distinguish between *natural* and *cultural* traits", according to M. Leiris. He then goes

on to discuss at length what "race" is and is not (pp. 88-96) and what is meant by "culture" and its effect upon human personality (pp. 96-108). Neither race nor culture can remain "pure-bred". Furthermore, historically speaking, no given race necessarily practices a single culture. "The customs of people can change without major alteration of their racial composition", which explains why "national character" is so fluid (p. 111). But can a hierarchy of cultures be established? (pp. 113-117). M. Leiris answers by saying: "Our notions of culture being themselves integral elements in a culture (that of the society to which we belong), it is impossible for us to adopt the impartial point of view from which alone a valid hierarchy of cultures could be established" (p. 116).

(4)

But suppose somebody raised the question: "If there are no innate racial aptitudes, how can we explain the fact that the white man's civilization has made the tremendous advances with which we are all familiar while the civilizations of the coloured peoples have lagged behind...?" (p. 125). Indeed one cannot be blind to "the fact that the development of human life is not everywhere the same but rather takes form in an extraordinary diversity of societies and civilizations" (p. 124). So Prof. Claude Lévi-Strauss brings a historian's perspective into the discussion on the race problem in *Race and History*.

The basic trouble, according to Prof. Lévi-Strauss, is that men have tried to explain away the diversity of culture while pretending to recognize it, by what he calls "false evolutionism". "Humanity is claimed to be one and the same everywhere, but this unity and identity can be achieved only gradually; the variety of cultures we find in the world illustrates the several stages in a process which conceals the ultimate reality or delays our recognition of it" (p. 130).

This obviously will not do. Diversity of cultures cannot be explained away by the commonly held naive conception of progress. Human progress is not to be denied, but it is "neither continuous nor inevitable" nor is it always "in the same direction". It can best be viewed as a cumulative history of "a series of leaps and bounds" that occurs in all directions (p. 137). A profound and lucid discussion on "'stationary' and 'cumulative' history", "the place of Western civilization" in the contemporary world, "chance and civilization", and "collaboration between cultures", both from the standpoint of philosophy of history and of history of civilization, leads the author to conclude: "No society is therefore essentially and intrinsically cumulative. Cumulative history is not the pre-

rogative of certain races or certain cultures, marking them off from the rest. It is the result of their conduct rather than their nature. It represents a certain 'way of life' of cultures which depends on their capacity to 'go-along-together'. In this sense, it may be said that cumulative history is the type of history characteristic of grouped societies — social super-organisms — while stationary history (supposing it to exist) would be the distinguishing feature of an inferior form of social life, the isolated society" (p. 156).

From this it follows: "We can see the diversity of human cultures behind us, around us, and before us. The only demand that we can justly make (entailing corresponding duties for every individual) is that all the forms this diversity may take may be so many contributions to the fullness of all the others" (p. 162).

(5)

All these learned discussions, however, still leave the basic question unanswered. Why then the race problem at all? Why do racial differences cause no problem in one society while they act like dynamite in another? To this problem of "racial attitudes" Prof. Kenneth Little addresses himself in *Race and Society*. One thing has become quite obvious: "Racial attitudes and feelings do not exist *in vacuo*", but only in a socio-cultural context in which history plays some decisive role (pp. 167-169). Prof. Little points out "a very significant fact of the virtual absence of racial relations as we define the term, before the period of European overseas expansion and exploration" (pp. 169-170), and puts forward the thesis that racial prejudice is part and parcel of "the development of capitalism and the profit motive as a characteristic feature of Western civilization" (p. 172). The root of the problem is "a deliberate attempt to depersonalize a whole group of human beings — to reduce them to mere articles of commerce or economic 'utilities'" (p. 173). The author takes up four case-histories to document this thesis: South Africa, Brazil, Hawaii, and Great Britain (pp. 175-208). What, then, does it all add up to?

"The phenomenon of race relations is part of a special era in human history, and it arose out of the earlier European attempt to exploit overseas territories, and it later became an integral part of colonialism, as an economic and imperial policy... There is nothing permanent about the race problem... Taking the long view, therefore, we can look forward with confidence to the day when race and colour distinctions will have ceased to plague mankind... But, in the meantime, the danger remains — and it is a very great one, and may become a major issue in world affairs... A

fundamental aspect of the problem is the enormous disparity in relative prosperity between Western peoples and the rest of the world... There is also, in large part, the same kind of psychological gap as obtained between rich and poor at the time of the agrarian and industrial revolution... Seen in this kind of perspective, the future of race relations is bound up with the whole re-organization of world affairs and is a world responsibility... The race problem is no longer a matter to be settled by parochial politics... What is needed, primarily, is an international effort to liberalize racial attitudes" (pp. 210-213).

(6)

The same question is dealt with from the standpoint of social psychology by Prof. Arnold M. Rose in *The Roots of Prejudice*. He lists several "causes" of prejudice: 1) advantage and material benefits for those who are prejudiced, such as "an excuse or rationalization for economic exploitation or political domination" (pp. 216 ff.); 2) ignorance of other groups coupled with so-called "stereotypes" of people belonging to them (pp. 219 ff.); 3) "racism" of various types characterized by a "superiority complex", as a "body of tradition" or a "part of popular culture" (pp. 221 ff.).

Discussing further the psychology of prejudice, Prof. Rose points out that by "scapegoating" a certain group, prejudice satisfies a psychological need of the frustrated personality (pp. 233-236). Those who are prejudiced may either be mentally unhealthy to begin with or will eventually end up as warped personalities (pp. 239-241).

The author lists, more or less at random, eight kinds of action against the roots of prejudice which in the opinion of this reviewer must be constantly and simultaneously carried on in every community today (pp. 241-243):

1. Intellectual enlightenment of the prejudiced to show them that their attitude harms them more than it benefits them.
2. Dissemination of accurate information about "minority" groups.
3. Concerted efforts to attack the tradition of racism.
4. Legislation to penalize discrimination based on group-prejudice.
5. Efforts to counteract the home, church, and school transmission and perpetuation of commonly held prejudices.
6. Economic development to provide economic security for all groups of people.

7. Demonstration that many of the fears cherished by the "majority" about the "minority" groups are imaginary.
8. Mental health programs to help develop healthier and saner personalities.

(7)

Is there then nothing to the "race" as such ? What is the scientific meaning of the term race ? This question is dealt with by Prof. L. C. Dunn in *Race and Biology*. Race in its contemporary, scientific usage is a biological concept based on Mendel's "gene theory" (p. 247). It is impossible here to review, even in the briefest form, Dr. Dunn's discussion. Careful study of this small but meaty booklet is therefore strongly recommended.

The author states that "the word *race* as generally used has no clear or exact meaning at all, and through frequent misuse has acquired unpleasant and distressing connotations" (p. 249). He believes, however, that the term needs to be retained in order to "denote a biological category, which although difficult to delimit, is a real factor in the structure of the human population on earth" (p. 250). Race basically means "biological kinship", which is nothing but a "community of genes". "It is biologically true that of the many thousands of hereditary units, genes, which any person inherits, the vast majority are the same as those in any other human being. These are the genes to which we owe our humanness" (p. 251).

But whence come the racial differences ? Dr. Dunn says that within the one great community of man :

"There are smaller communities between which there is little or no intermarriage and this partial biological separation or isolation is accompanied by differences between the groups as regards the frequency with which certain biological characters appear in them. Separate racial traits may change their frequency, that is to say, the 'race' is changeable, even in respect of hereditary characters... 'Race' is not a fixed or static category but a *dynamic* one. Biologically, a race is a result of the process by which a population becomes adapted to its environment. There is in human species no such thing as a pure race in the sense of one in which all members are alike" (pp. 251-253).

The validity of these statements is substantiated by a biological discussion on "heredity and environment", "the origin of biological differences", "how races form", "a biologist's view of race", and "race separation and race fusion". An extremely interesting discussion on "the operation of heredity" is attached as an appendix. In view of the context in which all these booklets are here reviewed,

it may not be amiss to re-emphasize one point: "Biologically, then, men belong to one mating circle, and share in a common pool of genes. There is thus no biological justification for race hatred or prejudice" (p. 276).

(8)

What, then, are we to make of observable racial differences? Dr. G. M. Morant, in *The Significance of Racial Differences* points out the mistake of attaching to groups personal qualities, such as "intelligent or stupid, energetic or slothful, cheerful or melancholy, courageous or cowardly", as many literary discussions on "racial characteristics" do. The problem properly defined is "whether, or how far, group differences are 'natural'", and "to what extent various conditions of life are responsible for them" (p. 294), that is to say, "genetical-racial differences" on the one hand, and "cultural-racial" on the other (p. 296). Following a lengthy discussion on "racial differences in body characters" (pp. 297-312), and one on "racial differences in mental characters" (pp. 312-321), the author concludes, "Few physical, and no mental, characters are believed to be ideal criteria in making racial comparison... It must be pointed out that men cannot be understood by summing up any list of their qualities: the essence of their being eludes description in any precise terms which can be catalogued... It is unlikely that there are any racial differences in mentality which make up an absolute distinction between all members of one population and all members of any other..." (p. 322-323).

(9)

And finally Dr. Harry L. Shapiro, in *Race Mixture*, deals with one of the problems which is most discussed and least understood by many concerned laymen. He begins by asserting that "the intermixture of populations and races must be a very ancient phenomenon, occurring wherever the opportunity for it arose". In this study, he refers only to "those mixtures occurring for the most part since circa A.D. 1500 between the more fully developed racial groups" (p. 332). He points out that racially mixed people came to be a problem as a group more or less distinct and permanent within a general population only in the last five centuries, as a result of the development of race consciousness to a degree unknown previously. This was due most significantly to the conquest of native people by Europeans.

"As members of a different culture, the rulers as a class rarely, if ever, understood the natives. They look down on them from a sense of their own superiority... Exclusiveness becomes a feeling

of necessity. And symbols of membership in the ruling class take on enhanced significance... Under these circumstances, any breaking down of the solid front of ruling class is resisted firmly. The native must be kept in his place. And by extension this applies to the half-caste, too. For if the mixed-bloods were fully accepted, all the laboriously created prestige would be threatened and probably destroyed. Thus purity of blood is highly prized in most colonial situations, although it must be admitted that exceptions occur" (pp. 347-348).

What happens biologically when two races are mixed? Reviewing cases of Polynesian-English mixture on Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific (pp. 353-361), *Race Crossing in Jamaica* by Davenport and Steggerda (1929) (pp. 361-366), and in Hawaii (pp. 366-370), the author concludes that "there is no reliable documentation that race mixture as a biological process is inevitably a deleterious one. Indeed, on theoretical grounds, one might maintain that hybridization, by producing a wider range of types, does in fact have certain very real biological merits... But the economic and social inferiority of the parental groups can and often do place an especially heavy burden on their mixed progeny, which, added to the disabilities they suffer anyway as half-castes, tends to reinforce their marginal position."

The injustice which is done the mixed-bloods is in the final analysis that when they are dealt with as a group, their individuality as human personalities is lost (pp. 371-372). And this is the crux of the matter in every aspect of the race or colour problem and of inter-group relations.

(10)

The Race Concept: Results of an Inquiry is a convenient handbook on the most up-to-date scientific knowledge on "race". UNESCO published a statement on race in 1950 prepared by a special committee, the majority of whose members were sociologists (see the Appendix). This statement was revised by another committee of physical anthropologists and human geneticists and a revised statement (see pp. 12-16) was issued in 1951, on which nearly one hundred anthropologists and biologists (pp. 84-88) were invited to comment. This brochure is a summary report of their comments and "suggested statements" on race emerging out of this inquiry.

Probably the most crucial thing to be learned from this document is to distinguish "race as a biological fact and the concept of race as a sociological phenomenon" (p. 9). Whatever race is, it is not what it is, but what man thinks it is, that causes the "race" prob-

lem. For that reason UNESCO is to be commended for having invited some leaders of world religions to state what their respective religions teach on the matter of race.

III

If mankind would follow unequivocally the most up-to-date findings of science, all that might be needed to wipe out racial hatred and colour prejudice would be to disseminate the UNESCO Series on *The Race Question in Modern Science* as widely as possible. But scientists themselves have made it quite clear that the problem is not as simple as that. To quote just one, anthropologist Little has said: "Harmony between persons of different racial origin does not depend upon their being properly informed about the latest findings of modern anthropology" (p. 166). Experience has shown that more often than not self-interest, economic, political, or otherwise, when enlightened, does more to foster good race relations than knowledge of scientific theories (cf. Rose, *op. cit.* pp. 226-228). However, the world can certainly stand much more genuine and constructive "moral persuasion" than it has thus far had. To this end nothing may be as pressing as a more concerted effort by the major religions of the world. It is therefore most fitting that UNESCO has published another series, *The Race Question and Modern Thought*.

Division of mankind into several not infrequently hostile camps on the basis of religious differences is as seriously detrimental to world peace as racial divisions and prejudices. The two problems, however, are not of the same kind and must not be confused with one another. In this series the author of each booklet speaks, from the standpoint of his own religion, on the race problem. And all agree that race prejudice and race discrimination have no place in true Christianity, Judaism, or Buddhism, whether race be understood in terms of biological reality or socio-cultural phenomenon.

This is not to deny that each of these religions has a peculiar pattern of race problem in its own ranks which has to be honestly grappled with before it can become an effective source of moral persuasion toward achieving racial justice in our world.

(I)

The Catholic Church and the Race Question by Father Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P., has already been reviewed in *The Student World* (No. IV, 1954). To lift only one point which to this reviewer appears to be very important, the Roman Catholic Church does not lightly gloss over existing differences among various human groups, but

views them realistically and then makes an effort to realize the basic and ultimate unity of mankind which transcends them all.

The inequalities are real human inequalities ; but they have nothing to do with any hereditary or genetically inevitable inferiority. They spring from the chance of history and sometimes geography. What time causes time can also change.

Father Congar concludes his treatise by saying :

"The Church herself sets human societies an example of good faith. She proclaims and applies the principle of the unity and equality of all men. She helps forward the less advanced, and even commits authority to them as soon as they are in a position to assume it. The Church is unity ; but within that unity there is an extraordinary diversity, and to that diversity, which includes the diversity of races (in so far as there are races), she gives a positive and sanctified meaning" (p. 58).

(2)

In *The Ecumenical Movement and the Racial Problem*, Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft presents the views of the member churches of the World Council of Churches, of which he is General Secretary. It is obvious that he has on his mind the racial injustices inflicted upon the Negro race by the white race in the United States and South Africa, and is painfully conscious that churches within the World Council of Churches are very much involved in it in both countries, and therefore have both a responsibility and an opportunity to rectify it. To Dr. Visser 't Hooft the race problem is not an academic question but a burning issue in which Christians are existentially involved. His treatment of it is in no sense "defensive" or "apologetic", but *historical* in the sense of understanding the present reality in its historical dimension, *theological* in the sense of subjecting the churches to the judgment of that norm by which the churches in order to be the Church must be governed, and finally *pastoral* in that both the white and the Negro are children of God to whom the Church, however imperfect, is called upon to minister.

Through the anti-slavery and overseas missionary movements the conscience of Christendom has been at work to set right the relationships between white and Negro all over the world. As to the ultimate aim there has never been any disagreement within the Church on the matter of race relations, but as to the immediate steps to be taken or the means to be used, there have been diverse opinions. (See *Historical Background ; The Churches and Race in the USA ; The Churches and Race in South Africa*). At the moment few problems afflict the conscience of the Church more than the

existence of all-Negro churches in the otherwise inter-racial society of the United States and the official attempt to perpetuate a similar situation by way of the *apartheid* policy in South Africa. The World Council of Churches, through its Central Committee, has given voice to this concern of its member churches :

"The Central Committee gives encouragement to all those in South Africa and elsewhere who are labouring for a solution of the racial problem in keeping with the Christian Gospel which reaffirms the principle of non-discrimination, and which calls upon the churches to engage in the Christian ministry of reconciliation" (p. 35).

Brief descriptions of the European churches' struggle against the racism of the Nazis (pp. 35-40), and of racial tensions in Asia and other parts of the world (pp. 41-46) show that nowhere in the world are the Christian churches spared from facing this problem ; hence ecumenical conferences since as early as Edinburgh 1910 have always had something to say about the Christian stand on it (pp. 46-51).

The Christian Gospel demands that the churches face the race problem squarely wherever and however it exists, and, at the same time, confrontation with the race problem compels the churches to articulate more sharply some aspects of the Gospel which had remained ambiguous in the past. For example, the full implication of the concept of the Church as the *people of God* cannot be grasped apart from its supra-national and supra-racial character (pp. 53-55), or the full impact of Acts 17 : 26 (the Christian conception of race) cannot be felt apart from the realization of multi-racial Christian congregations or communities, local, national, or international (pp. 55-60). In the meantime the churches are seeking the most Christian way to deal with existing differences among racial, cultural, and national — or ethnic — groups, never forgetting for one moment that mankind is both basically and ultimately one. (See Theory and Practice, Ethnic Churches, and the Future Task — pp. 60-68.)

(3)

Dr. Leon Roth, sometime Rector of the University of Jerusalem, is asked by UNESCO, in his *Jewish Thought as a Factor in Civilization*, to state not so much what Judaism teaches the Jew on his relation with other ethnic groups as what specific contribution Judaism has made to world civilization (see Preface). The Jew is frequently mistakenly accused of "racial exclusivism", more often than not to justify Christian discrimination against him. Although this booklet does not attempt to prove how wrong are commonly cherished notions about the Jew, Christians must humbly acknowl-

edge that the Jew has been for centuries a victim of injustices condoned if not conspired by the churches.

Modern Western civilization could not be what it is apart from the contributions of three distinct peoples, the monotheism of the Hebrews, the philosophy, art and science of the Greeks, and the jurisprudence of the Romans. In each case what was at first a national or ethnic characteristic became in the end universal. In this sense the history of the Jewish nation is the history of mankind seen from the standpoint of the God-man relationship. The basic unity of all mankind is the foundation upon which Judaism stands (p. 14). Judaism is intended to be a universal way of life, as the Decalogue aptly illustrates (pp. 19-21), and the basic idea undergirding this way of life may best be termed as ethical monotheism. The Jews view the God-man relationship primarily in terms of man's ethical decision in history, while the Greeks saw it in terms of man's understanding of nature (pp. 30-43). This point is extremely important in relation to such great concepts as freedom, equality, justice, holiness, mercy, and peace, and man's relation to himself and to other men, his relation to nature, property, wealth, means of production, social institutions (e.g. the state), all of which have a direct bearing upon the problem of racial and ethnic relations. (See, for helpful exposition on this point, *Some Illustrations and Applications*, pp. 44-60.)

If there can be one concept to describe the Jewish way of life, it may be the emancipation of every man from the bondage of idolatry that he may be truly and fully man in the presence of God, his Lord and King (Epilogue, pp. 61-63), where race, colour, nationality, social class, and all other groupings are completely transcended.

(4)

The last so far to appear in this series is *Buddhism and the Race Question* by Prof. G. P. Malalasekera, Dean of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, and Mr. K. N. Jayatilleke, Lecturer in Philosophy, both at the University of Ceylon.

In the short introduction the authors discuss the relation of Buddhism to science and philosophy, and establish the thesis that Buddhism is "a religion in the sense that it is a way of life following from the acceptance of a certain set of propositions which are considered to represent the facts of existence pertaining to the life and destiny of man in the universe" (p. 17).

It is extremely important that the reader of this booklet thoroughly grasp the full meaning of this statement in which the uniqueness of Buddhism is succinctly expressed. Those who are

unfamiliar with Buddhism are urged to study the Introduction (pp. 9-18) very carefully.

Most enlightening for the non-Buddhists is the authors' discussion of the Indian caste system and race, in which they claim that "the analogy between race prejudice and discrimination and the prejudice and discrimination within the hierarchy of castes is so close that the case against the former is applicable to the latter — and vice versa" (p. 20). "By prohibiting intermarriage between castes, caste groups operate genetically like racial caste groups and it is possible that if such isolation is perpetuated caste groups may in time exhibit visibly different racial types" (p. 25).

Buddhism was in a sense a protest against the "racism" emanating from the Brahminic caste system. It stresses the "dignity and equality of mankind and the case against caste", (a) from the biological standpoint (pp. 40-44) — "man is biologically one species"; (b) from the sociological standpoint (pp. 45-49), "the Hindu conception of society was static and was dominated by the idea of caste", whereas "a Buddhist myth genesis gives an evolutionary account of society and shows how what later became caste divisions arose from a necessary division of functions in society at a certain stage of social evolution" (pp. 45-46); and (c) from the ethical and religious standpoint — "all men irrespective of caste were capable of spiritual development" and are "likewise equal before the moral law" (pp. 49-50).

Equally important is "the spiritual unity of mankind" that transcends all apparent differences and divisions.

"All men have the capacity to attain salvation, irrespective of the race or caste to which they belong, and it is this quest for eternal happiness which constitutes the religious quest of man... So when we consider differences among human beings it is not the shape of their limbs, the colour of their skins, their parentage or social status that matters, but the question how far each human being is from his goal, which is also the goal of all mankind, and which gives him real happiness and perfect mental health" (pp. 51-52).

How then does Buddhism implement its teaching on race and caste? The heart of the discussion on "the practical policy" (pp. 55-68) may be summarized in the oft-repeated saying: "As a mother at the risk of her life watches over her own child, her only child, so also let everyone cultivate a boundless (friendly) mind towards all being" (p. 61). Where racial consciousness and colour prejudices stand in the way of man's moral and spiritual development, the Buddhist way of dealing with them is "to seek the causes and conditions which bring them about or accentuate them and then

proceed to eradicate these causal factors" (p. 70). Since the Buddhist diagnosis finds the causes "in man as an individual as well as in society as an organization", emphasis is laid equally on both "a change of heart and outlook on the part of individuals" and "a change in the organization of human society" (pp. 70-72), but never on a "crusade" in the interest of the expansion of Buddhism itself (p. 72). Buddhism does not regard itself as "a unique revelation which alone contains the sole truth", but its definition of "the right philosophy of life" is "comprehensive enough to contain, recognize, and respect whatever truth other religions may have" (p. 73).

IV

Speaking as a Christian to Christians, this reviewer would conclude by pointing out that every one of us today is involved in the race problem, the adequate solution of which requires the co-operation of people in both camps. There must be individuals among the oppressed and among the prejudiced who are Christian enough to transcend racial differences. How can such individuals enter into a vital working relationship with one another while there still exist social systems, legal or extra-legal, rooted in racial prejudice? When we find Jews and Buddhists who, because of their religious convictions, are committed to racial justice and equality of all people, how can we as Christians, while remaining true to the Gospel, join forces with them in our common fight against the evil of racism which one writer has called "one of the most disturbing phenomena of the great revolution of the modern world"? (Alfred Metraux, quoted by Michel Leiris, in *Race and Culture*, p. 86.) Here, it seems to me, we are compelled both to re-examine the Christian Gospel itself, as we honestly face the problem of racism, and also to view the phenomenological reality of race in the light of the Gospel. This is Christian dialectic we cannot escape.

* * *

ONE BODY, ONE GOSPEL, ONE WORLD — THE CHRISTIAN MISSION TODAY, by Lesslie Newbigin. International Missionary Council, London and New York. 1958. 56 pp. \$0.25.

Bishop Newbigin of the Church of South India and newly elected General Secretary of the International Missionary Council, intended this booklet to stimulate "further thought and study", but it amounts to something more like a manifesto, the effects of which may be felt for years to come. He summarizes the major theological

and practical questions involved in discussion of the Christian mission today, and then sets forth with clarity, grace, and compelling logic, his own answers to these questions. All who are taking part in the WSCF study of the Life and Mission of the Church will find Newbigin's manifesto of central importance. All who are not yet taking part will find this book a good place to begin. It is cheap, short, well organized, and attractively printed. Almost any student will understand it. The author addresses himself to a much wider audience of concerned Christian people than the professional theologians and church administrators for whom one might expect him to be writing.

It is, of course, written with the sphere of interest of the International Missionary Council primarily in mind. But if the emphasis is on "foreign missions", the author does not fail to set this within the larger framework of the whole life and mission of the Church. "Integration" is in the air. The IMC and the WCC are about to be wed, and Bishop Newbigin, as a chief match-maker, wishes to point out what unique contributions the "missionary enterprise" may bring to the union and what might be better thrown away or left at home.

This reader found particularly helpful the author's careful definition of key terms that are often used ambiguously in Christian discussion. He defines "missionary" for example as *activity* undertaken with the conscious *intention* of bringing someone from unbelief to faith. Evangelism, on the other hand, should be used to describe only one form of mission in which *words* are used, with the above intention in mind. But to achieve its object — the conversion of others — evangelism must be linked to service and service to evangelism.

Does *koinonia* provide the necessary link between evangelism and service, in the sense that both relief workers and preachers may belong to the same congregation? Or is Christian community itself a missionary activity which by its existence helps to move people from unbelief to faith? Newbigin seems only to say that *koinonia* is the New Life in the Spirit from which all mission springs; at the same time it is a test of missionary effectiveness, since the appearance of *koinonia* in and with the "others" is a sign that the object of conversion has been achieved. Thus it is not we ourselves, but the Spirit that beareth witness, in our words, in our deeds of service, and in our fellowship with one another as Christians.

CHARLES LONG.

THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION, by George S. Hendry. SCM Press, London, 1959. 174 pp. 15s.

The author has taken as his starting-point what he calls the "fragmentation of the Gospel" as revealed by the ecumenical movement of our times. He believes the reason for this fragmentation to be the "preoccupation with single elements of the Gospel, such as the incarnation or the atonement, to the relative neglect of others..." (p. 9). He claims that the "norms of theology" (Tillich) — that is, the hermeneutic principles — derived from a particular historical situation have necessarily resulted in fragmentary interpretations of the Gospel. He suggests that the remedy is to find a relation to the incarnate life of Christ. The Jesus of history is an often forgotten factor between the birth and the death and resurrection of Christ. The result has been the constant revolt of piety against faith conceived as a "deposit" of history, and this is reflected in the Catholic-Protestant, as much as in the East-West, controversy.

The author wants to give an interpretation to the incarnation which is actually a reintegration of incarnation and atonement. The connecting link is the historical life of the incarnate Christ (p. 31). In two chapters the author reviews Eastern and Western theology concerning the humanity of Christ. The author suggests that Eastern theology, represented by Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Cyril of Alexandria, was interested mainly in the "ontological relation with mankind into which Christ entered by his incarnation and which forms the presupposition or precondition of his atoning work" (p. 45), and voices some criticism of this thinking in ontological categories. He declares that the incarnational theology of the East looks upon the incarnate Christ as the almost objectively accomplished fact of man's salvation. Unfortunately, he does not present clear evidence to support this claim. Certainly if only the formulations of the Chalcedonese or the sometimes very subtle discussions of the East are taken as background, this interpretation may arise; however, the concept of the deification of man to which the author refers can give quite another perspective to these discussions. Unfortunately, Irenaeus, one of the clearest representatives of this concept, is only quoted very briefly. A deeper penetration into his theology, and also into that of other representatives of this thought, could have produced a different judgment on the theological developments of the East.

As to the Western developments, which are considered in an extremely short chapter, the author claims that Anselm has replaced

the Eastern concept by the "generic identity" of man and the incarnate Christ (p. 65). Thus the humanity of Christ is no longer the almost automatic presupposition of man's salvation. It is in a later chapter concerning the atonement that Western theology is more thoroughly presented in the counter-position of the Abelardian and the Anselmian concepts of the atonement.

Discussing modern developments, the author refers to the theology in England and America during the last century which made an attempt "to translate the Gospel into ethical concepts and categories" (p. 80). He feels that the merit of this development was that it brought the problem of the atonement into the foreground and drove some theologians back to the incarnational theology of the ancient Church. In the chapter on the incarnate life, the author refers especially to two British theologians, H. R. Mackintosh and P. T. Forsyth, as major examples of this tendency. However, by the "ethical category" the author seems to suggest more than morality but rather the personal application of the Gospel which leads to man's salvation. An extensive reference to the concept of Karl Barth is placed in this context. The author sees in him a kind of synthesis between Eastern theology and the personal application of salvation.

The present book finds its merit in its systematic interest in deepening the concept of the incarnation rather than as a historical record. The selection of theologians from the history of dogma may sometimes be arbitrary and limited to illustrating some of the author's own concepts. Therefore, the book will create a more interesting discussion on the systematic level than as a historic presentation, for in the latter respect it could have been more up-to-date, especially if the author had not confined himself to the Continental theology of previous generations but included contemporary research, especially of German and French origin.

VILMOS VAJTA.

THE REALITY OF THE CHURCH, by Claude Welch. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1958. 254 pp. \$3.95.

Among contributions to ecumenical thinking, the full-length statement of a man's own position is often a most welcome form of utterance. Just because it is neither an official doctrinal statement, or a book *about* ecumenism, Dr. Welch's book is bound to clear some air. The writer treats the doctrine of the Church as an integral whole, and in its relation to other branches of Christian doctrine. The presentation is at least one step removed from the exigencies

of current debate, yet at the same time it involves some implicit criticisms of the way current Faith and Order studies are going.

For Welch, the problem of the Church must be attacked on the ground floor. How can what Christian faith asserts about the Church — that it is a new creation, a people of God, a colony of heaven — be reconciled with the fact that it is also obviously a human association with faults, divisions, and forms of organization identical with those of other human associations that make no transcendent claims? Traditional ways of dealing with this question are inadequate to the extent that they postulate some sort of “invisible” or “spiritual” ecclesiological reality which is by definition immune to involvement in human shortcomings. On the contrary, for Welch, the Church is unequivocally on *our* side of the creator-creature distinction, and it is so not only in its empirical forms but in its basic, ontological reality.

The latter conviction is the thread which holds Welch’s discussion together. The point is not that the Church is to be examined merely from the sociological, empirical point of view, to the abandonment of all theological considerations. On the contrary, Welch seems to be telling us that the Church’s humanity before God is only made possible by the gracious acts of God in Jesus Christ. The humanity of the Church is believing, responding humanity — and, by that token, true humanity. “Like the humanity of Christ, which cannot be spoken of independently of the incarnation, the church has no existence as immanent historical community independent of the act of God calling it and sustaining it in being.” The Church is “the world brought to self-consciousness at the point of its destiny”. In statements such as these, the heart of Welch’s argument appears.

To his credit, the author does not attempt to sustain this thesis by means of a *tour de force*. His is a rich discussion of many aspects of the problem of the Church: its relation to christology, to eschatology, to the Holy Spirit, and to the world — as well as of the relevance of the various biblical images: the body, the bride, the vine. The loose ends that must inevitably appear in such a treatment happily remain loose. Yet at every point Dr. Welch’s fundamental concern appears. Christologically, for example, Welch stresses our Lord’s humanity, and draws on the image of the Servant to show that Christ’s humiliation is not only the form of his earthly appearance but of his actual Lordship as well. Our faith in the Son of God, far from rendering historical investigation of the life of Jesus unnecessary, drives us forward to determine what the empirical (one might almost say sociological) outlines of that life were like. “If we wish to say that the church existed in Jesus Christ alone, and particularly

in Christ on the cross... then we must recognize that it existed there precisely in the believing humanity of our Lord."

Precisely because of this stress on the historic humanity of Christ, we cannot treat the analogy between Christ and the Church as more than an analogy. The analogy with Christ, as far as it goes, points not to some transcendent reality underlying the outward appearance of the Church, but to its servant form. The Church exists in history, and therefore in eschatological tension and in sin. For the same reasons, the image of the "body" of Christ is not to be applied "literally". It, too, is an analogy, a metaphor. It is not a way of lifting the Church "mystically" out of its involvement with the conditions of this world, but of stressing that the Church is precisely in the world and part of the world.

It follows from this that every attempt to draw boundaries between the Church and the world is misdirected. Christ's Lordship over the world is not to be identified with his headship over the Church, nor is the Church a mediator between God's rule and the world. The meaning of *extra ecclesia nulla salus* has been distorted by a wrong view of "salvation" which connects that term with the ultimate destiny of the individual. The true meaning of the famous principle is simply that "healing" and "reconciliation" are to be found only in Christ, and therefore in the realm of God's rule over his creation. The Church and the Kingdom of God are to be identified in the consummation of the age only to the extent that "Church" has always been understood as the arena of recognition of God's rule, wherever that rule may take effect.

Welch closes his discussion with a treatment of the ecclesiological importance of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The fact that the Church appears only in the Spirit-centred third article of the Nicene Creed points, for Welch, to the centrality of human response as a criterion of the Church's existence. The fruits of the spirit are no less important marks of the Church than the ministry and the sacraments. Indeed it is quite impossible to reach binding definitions concerning the historical form of the Church's life, for these forms are only to be compared with the habit-patterns of individuals, through which the continuity of personal existence is maintained.

The reviewer must say frankly that he finds the main outlines of this presentation extremely congenial, and if criticisms are to be made, they are in the nature of self-criticisms as well as criticisms of the author. But this is precisely the position to which one is led in ecumenical work. One says what is in one's heart, and yet at the same time one knows that one must answer many questions posed by the existence of other theological traditions. Surely the problem

in this whole presentation is that of how we know that the empirical, responding company of Christian believers we call the Church is really part of the activity of God in history. How can we explain it? What happens to humanity when it is touched by divinity? Surely it is not enough to say only that it becomes "believing humanity". Yet it is equally wrong, the reviewer is convinced, to say that it becomes more than humanity. Dr. Welch is certainly right in insisting that the problem is not to convince the outside world that the Church is really more than the rather doubtful human aggregation it appears to be. Yet it is surely not enough to say, with him, that all these judgments about the human churchly community are made "in faith". Could we not press further with the analysis, so well begun in this volume, of how Christ's Lordship is expressed precisely in his humiliation: of how humanity becomes true humanity when it shares the kingly work of God in history by assuming "the form of a servant"? The chapter on this subject is very probably the key to the whole book. If the insights contained there could penetrate more fully the rest of the argument, the whole case might be strengthened: not by way of accommodation to the viewpoint of the more "high church" traditions, but by way of expressing even more adequately what Dr. Welch's own tradition (Methodist, with a well-controlled touch of Calvinism, to judge from this volume!) has to contribute to the thinking of the *oikumene*.

LEWIS S. MUDGE.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Mention here neither implies nor precludes review. Books for review should be sent to the World's Student Christian Federation, 13 rue Calvin, Geneva, Switzerland.

VALUE CONVICTIONS AND HIGHER EDUCATION, by John E. Smith.
The Edward W. Hazen Foundation, New Haven, Conn., USA.
36 pp., paper cover.

TWO-WAY TRAFFIC: STORIES, LESSONS AND PROJECTS ON AFRICA,
by Winifred Warr. Edinburgh House Press, London. 56 pp.,
paper cover. 3s.

GLAD ENCOUNTER: JESUS CHRIST AND THE LIVING FAITHS OF MEN,
by George Appleton. Edinburgh House Press, London. 88 pp.,
paper cover. 5s.

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